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A JOURNAL OF
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& THE DRAMA.



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LITERATURE,
THE ARTS

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(Letters and MSS. for the Editor, and Books for review, should be addressed to 10, Adelphi Terrace, W.C.2.)

THE WAR-MEMORIAL DANGER

HOW narrow the escape has been we do not know; but we have escaped. When on the morning of Tuesday week we found in *The Times* a picture of Sir Frank Baines's plan of a national war-memorial, with a commendatory note, we feared that the great influence of Lord Northcliffe was engaged in the attempt to thrust this sham Egyptian monstrosity upon us. Since then, however, the outburst of ridicule, criticism and anger in the rest of the press has been vehement enough to make us safe.

But a national war-memorial there will have to be, and now that we have been made sensible of our danger, we had better remain alert to it. And in order that our defence may be on the smallest possible front, we ought to make up our minds that a war-memorial in the exact sense is impossible. We have not the architects, we have not the money to burn, and, above all, we have not the common consciousness to which it can appeal. Never was there a war in which a victorious nation fought for so many different things, and at this very moment the English people is profoundly divided in itself between those who believe that the war was fought to make war impossible, and those who hold that it was to make us top-dogs in the world. No war-memorial can satisfy both. The lion swinging his tail that might content the one class would be an outrage to the other.

We had better set our faces against any memorial which explicitly commemorates the war. The opportunities of disaster in such an enterprise are innumerable, and disaster is certain. Let us set our minds on some building of practical utility which, though made to commemorate the war, has some saving function of its own. A useful function will preserve our architects from megalomania and "art"; it will be compre-

hensible by all. Therefore we are by no means opposed to the project of building a decent bridge at Charing Cross as a war-memorial. If that plan is adopted there is a reasonable hope that we shall not be altogether ashamed of the result, and that something will be added to the dignity and beauty of London instead of something being taken away from our national self-esteem.

Yet we cannot help thinking that a building might be planned which would have a function more closely in accord with the ideal purposes of the war. The war was fought, we say, for liberty and civilization. And though there is no general agreement upon what those words mean, or even upon their meaning anything at all, we could have a building which would be a perpetual demonstration of what they might, what they ought to mean for Englishmen. For liberty and civilization are universal terms; if England is the victorious guardian of the realities they enshrine, it is on condition that she shares them with the world. A liberty and a civilization which are kept for consumption at home have no right to the names.

If, therefore, we were to build a "school of the nations" in London which should be a home for students from every people under the sun, a place where the broken threads of international civilization might be joined together again and knit more firmly for the future, where foreigners of every kind would be sure of welcome, and would learn to understand British institutions and appreciate British liberty, which we still believe to be the fullest in the world, then we should have a war-memorial which could never become an antiquarian relic, but would be an ever-active influence towards the ideals for which the country fought, and some mitigation of our failure to live up to them during the early years of the peace.

SUNRISE IN CONEGLIANO

MY bed was to the left of the massive carved door in an alcove, across the opening of which curtains of crimson damask were draped back to either side. The bed was raised on a dais, and, opposite, the great windows, with their ornate gilding above, were also draped in crimson damask.

The nurse in her blue-lined hood came and went. In my lucid moments I called her "the grenadier" because of her walk, which was not heavy; but every sound tortured me.

The sombre magnificence of the room weighed upon me as though it were a plaque of lead on my chest. I couldn't lift it from me; my arms had become helpless pieces of aching bone: to move them was agony. They lay stretched beside my legs, motionless. Now and then I moved my head a little to one side or the other; that movement was pain also, everything was pain, the moving of my eyes was pain. Yet they were my one resource, for I could see the sun shine through the windows; and always the sky was blue. Wanderingly I murmured, "That little tent of blue that prisoners call the sky." What was the other line? "And at every cloud . . . And at every little cloud that trailed its . . ." There was another word—"ravelled," that was it—"that trailed its ravelled fleeces by." I repeated the words several times; the repetition gave me momentary pleasure. What was that? Someone had looked at me. Someone dressed in black with a white face. They thought I was going to die, so they dressed in black. But I was not going to die. Who was it? Again! "Go away. Grenadier, tell her to go away." What right has Lucille to stare at me when I am helpless? Why did Ernestine let Lucille stare at me?

Ages passed—ages and ages of hideous, racking, torturing pain. Paris was destroyed by lightning, the thunder was terrible, it smashed my head into fragments. Someone bent over the bed and poured something down my throat that burnt its way slowly into my stomach. They were poisoning me. Who was the man with a beard? I saw a man with a beard. Someone said he had a beard. Had he got a beard? They did disgusting things to me, disgusting. What were they doing downstairs? What had they been doing all that eternity of time? I hear a piano; somebody's playing a piano. I don't mind, I rather like it. They ought to do something while they wait all this time.

Night again, night. I don't remember its being night before for ages, not since they put me in the ice bath. That was at night. Ernestine helped Assola, the doctor, to put me in the bath. Ernestine saw me naked. That's a new nurse. I can follow her with my eyes without their hurting much. She's fat, rather coarse, not very. The Grenadier wasn't coarse. Where's the Grenadier? Nurse, where's the Grenadier? She comes to the bed and opens and shuts her mouth. What a fool! Why doesn't she speak? Nurse, where's the Grenadier? She puts her lips close to my ear and I can just hear her say something. It sounds very distant. "What? . . . What?" She repeats the same words. I know they're the same words, but I can't understand. I try to move, but I can't;

the attempt is agonizing pain. Besides, I'm helpless. I laugh feebly; it's funny being so helpless. How long have I been like this? "Nurse, how long?" She comes back and talks into my ear again. I hear faint sounds. Why doesn't she speak properly? What a fool! God! What a fool to have for a nurse!

I can see light through the curtain. I can smell something, a nice smell. It's coffee, black coffee. She brings it in a cup and I drink it, a very little at a time, almost choking. But it's good. She can't be such a fool or she wouldn't give me something I like. She has made the room light, not quite light, but I can see the sky: it is fiery red and there are no clouds. "I want to look at the sky, lift my head up." I thought I said that, but I didn't hear it. She heard. She does something to my pillow but it hurts and I cry out. What a funny noise, like a squeak! Babies make these noises. She put my head back again, but I can see the sky, not so red now. It's turning blue. I can see it slowly turning blue. Nurse! Coffee! What a delicious thing coffee is! But get away your body, it's between me and the sky. She hears again. She can't be such a fool if she hears. I heard nothing.

There's the Grenadier. "Oh, Grenadier, Grenadier, I'm so glad. Come here." She comes close to me, the fat one stands behind her. "How long shall I be like this, Grenadier? When won't it hurt?" She puts her mouth close to my ear like the other. I hear the same sounds. "I don't hear you, I tell you; say it louder." She does it again, quite into my ear; still I can't hear what she says. She stands beside me and puts her hand on my head, looking at me. Suddenly it dawns on me. "Good God, I'm stone deaf."

STEPHEN HUDSON.

THE PERFECT CRITIC

II.*

"L'écrivain de style abstrait est presque toujours un sentimental, du moins un sensitif. L'écrivain artiste n'est presque jamais un sentimental, et très rarement un sensitif."—"Le Problème du Style."

THE statement already quoted, that "poetry is the most highly organized form of intellectual activity," may be taken as a specimen of the abstract style in criticism. The confused distinction which exists in most heads between "abstract" and "concrete" is due not so much to a manifest fact of the existence of two types of mind, an abstract and a concrete, as to the existence of another type of mind, the verbal, or philosophic. I, of course, do not imply any general condemnation of philosophy; I am, for the moment, using the word "philosophic" to cover the unscientific ingredients of philosophy; to cover, in fact, the greater part of the philosophic output of the last hundred years. There are two ways in which a word may be "abstract." It may have (the word "activity," for example) a meaning which cannot be grasped by appeal to any of the senses; its apprehension may require a deliberate suppression of analogies of visual or muscular experience, which is none the less an effort of imagination,

* Part I. appeared in THE ATHENÆUM for July 9.

"Activity" will mean for the trained scientist, if he employs the term, either nothing at all or something still more exact than anything it suggests to us. If we are allowed to accept certain remarks of Pascal and Mr. Bertrand Russell about mathematics, we believe that the mathematician deals with objects—if he will permit us to call them objects—which directly affect his sensibility. And during a good part of history the philosopher endeavoured to deal with objects which he believed to be of the same exactness as the mathematician's. Finally Hegel arrived, and if not perhaps the first, he was certainly the most prodigious exponent of emotional systematization, dealing with his emotions as if they were definite objects which had aroused those emotions. His followers have as a rule taken for granted that words have definite meanings, overlooking the tendency of words to become indefinite emotions. (No one who had not witnessed the event could imagine the conviction in the tone of Professor Eucken as he pounded the table and exclaimed *Was ist Geist? Geist ist . . .*). If verbalism were confined to professional philosophers, no harm would be done. But their corruption has extended very far. Compare a mediæval theologian or mystic, compare a seventeenth-century preacher, with any "liberal" sermon since Schleiermacher, and you will observe that words have changed their meanings. What they have lost is definite, and what they have gained is indefinite.

The vast accumulations of knowledge—or at least of information—deposited by the nineteenth century have been responsible for an equally vast ignorance. When there is so much to be known, when there are so many fields of knowledge in which the same words are used with different meanings, when everyone knows a little about a great many things, it becomes increasingly difficult for anyone to know whether he knows what he is talking about or not. And when we do not know, or when we do not know enough, we tend always to substitute emotions for thoughts. The sentence so frequently quoted in this essay will serve for an example of this process as well as any, and may be profitably contrasted with the opening phrases of the "Posterior Analytics." Not only all knowledge, but all feeling, is in perception. The inventor of poetry as the most highly organized form of intellectual activity was not engaged in perceiving when he composed this definition; he had nothing to be aware of except his own emotion about "poetry." He was in fact absorbed in a very different "activity" not only from that of Mr. Symonds, but from that of Aristotle.

Aristotle is a person who has suffered from the adherence of persons who must be regarded less as his disciples than as his sectaries. One must be firmly distrustful of accepting Aristotle in a canonical spirit; this is to lose the whole living force of him. He was primarily a man of not only remarkable but universal intelligence; and universal intelligence means that he could apply his intelligence to anything. The ordinary intelligence is good only for certain classes of objects; a brilliant man of science, if he is interested in poetry at all, may conceive grotesque judgments: like one poet because he reminds him

of himself, or another because he expresses emotions which he admires; he may use art, in fact, as the outlet for the egotism which is suppressed in his own speciality. But Aristotle had none of these impure desires to satisfy; in whatever sphere of interest, he looked solely and steadfastly at the object; in his short and broken treatise he provides an eternal example—not of laws, or even of method, for there is no method except to be very intelligent, but of intelligence itself swiftly operating the analysis of sensation to the point of principle and definition.

It is far less Aristotle than Horace who has been the model for criticism up to the nineteenth century. A precept, such as Horace or Boileau gives us, is merely an unfinished analysis. It appears as a law, a rule, because it does not appear in its most general form; it is empirical. When we understand necessity, as Spinoza knew, we are free because we assent. The dogmatic critic, who lays down a rule, who affirms a value, has left his labour incomplete. Such statements may often be justifiable as a saving of time; but in matters of great importance the critic must not coerce, and he must not make judgments of worse and better. He must simply elucidate: the reader will form the correct judgment for himself.

And again the purely "technical" critic—the critic, that is, who writes to expound some novelty or impart some lesson to practitioners of an art—can be called a critic only in a narrow sense. He may be analysing perceptions and the means for arousing perceptions, but his aim is limited and is not the disinterested exercise of intelligence. The narrowness of the aim makes easier the detection of the merit or feebleness of the work; even of these writers there are very few—so that their "criticism" is of great importance within its limits. So much suffices for Campion. Dryden is far more disinterested; he displays much free intelligence; and yet even Dryden—or any literary critic of the seventeenth century—is not quite a free mind, compared, for instance, with such a mind as Rochefoucauld's. There is always a tendency to legislate rather than to inquire, to revise accepted laws, even to overturn, but to reconstruct out of the same material. And the free intelligence is that which is wholly devoted to inquiry.

Coleridge, again, whose natural abilities, and some of whose performances, are probably more remarkable than those of any other modern critic, cannot be estimated as an intelligence completely free. The nature of the restraint in his case is quite different from that which limited the seventeenth-century critics, and is much more personal. Coleridge's metaphysical interest was quite genuine, and was, like most metaphysical interest, an affair of his emotions. But a literary critic should have no emotions except those immediately provoked by a work of art—and these (as I have already hinted) are, when valid, perhaps not to be called emotions at all. Coleridge is apt to take leave of the data of criticism, and arouse the suspicion that he has been diverted into a metaphysical hare-and-hounds. His end does not always appear to be the return to the work of art with improved perception and intensified, because more conscious, enjoyment; his centre of interest changes, his feelings are impure. In the derogatory sense he is more "philosophic" than

Aristotle. For everything that Aristotle says illuminates the literature which is the occasion for saying it; but Coleridge only now and then. It is one more instance of the pernicious effect of emotion.

Aristotle had what is called the scientific mind—a mind which, as it is rarely found among scientists except in fragments, might better be called the intelligent mind. For there is no other intelligence than this, and so far as artists and men of letters are intelligent (we may doubt whether the level of intelligence among men of letters is as high as among men of science) their intelligence is of this kind. Ste.-Beuve was a physiologist by training; but it is probable that his mind, like that of the ordinary scientific specialist, was limited in its interest, and that this was not, primarily, an interest in art. If he was a critic, there is no doubt that he was a very good one; but we may conclude that he earned some other name. Of all modern critics, perhaps Remy de Gourmont had most of the general intelligence of Aristotle. An amateur, though an excessively able amateur, in physiology, he combined to a remarkable degree sensitiveness, erudition, sense of fact and sense of history, and generalizing power.

We assume the gift of a superior sensibility. And for sensibility wide and profound reading does not mean merely a more extended pasture. There is not merely an increase of understanding, leaving the original acute impression unchanged. The new impressions modify the impressions received from the objects already known. An impression needs to be constantly refreshed by new impressions in order that it may persist at all; it needs to take its place in a system of impressions. And this system tends to become articulate in a generalized statement of literary beauty.

There are, for instance, many scattered lines and tercets in the "Divine Comedy" which are capable of transporting even a quite uninitiated reader, just sufficiently acquainted with the roots of the language to decipher the meaning, to an impression of overpowering beauty. This impression may be so deep that no subsequent study and understanding will intensify it. But at this point the impression is emotional; the reader in the ignorance which we postulate is unable to distinguish the poetry from an emotional state aroused in himself by the poetry, a state which may be merely an indulgence of his own emotions. The poetry may be an accidental stimulus. The end of the enjoyment of poetry is a pure contemplation from which all the accidents of personal emotion are removed; thus we aim to see the object as it really is and find a meaning for the words of Arnold. And without a labour which is largely a labour of the intelligence, we are unable to attain that stage of vision "amor intellectualis Dei."

Such considerations, cast in this general form, may appear commonplace. But I believe that it is always opportune to call attention to the torpid superstition that appreciation is one thing, and "intellectual" criticism something else. Appreciation in popular psychology is one faculty, and criticism another, an arid cleverness building theoretical scaffolds upon one's own perceptions or those of others. On the contrary, the true generalization is not something superposed upon an accumulation of perceptions; the perceptions do not,

in a really appreciative mind, accumulate as a mass, but form themselves as a structure; and criticism is the statement in language of this structure; it is a development of sensibility. The bad criticism, on the other hand, is that which is nothing but an expression of emotion. And emotional people—such as stockbrokers, politicians, men of science—and a few people who pride themselves on being unemotional—detest or applaud great writers such as Spinoza or Stendhal because of their "frigidity."

The writer of the present essay once committed himself to the statement that "the poetic critic is criticizing poetry in order to create poetry." He is now inclined to believe that the "historical" and the "philosophical" critics had better be called historians and philosophers quite simply. As for the rest, there are merely various degrees of intelligence. It is fatuous to say that criticism is for the sake of "creation" or creation for the sake of criticism. It is also fatuous to assume that there are ages of criticism and ages of creativeness, as if by plunging ourselves into intellectual darkness we were in better hope of finding spiritual light. The two directions of sensibility are complementary; and as sensibility is rare, unpopular, and desirable, it is to be expected that the critic and the creative artist should frequently be the same person.

T. S. ELIOT.

Poetry

THE FIRST NIGHTINGALES

When first we hear the shy-come nightingales,
They seem to mutter o'er their songs in fear
And (climbing e'er so soft the spinney rails)
All stops as if no bird was anywhere.
The kindled bushes with the young leaves thin
Let curious eyes to search a long way in,
Until impatience cannot see or hear
The hidden music; gets but little way
Upon the path, when up the songs begin
Full loud a moment—and then low again.
But when a day or two confirms her stay
Boldly she sings and loud for half the day,
And soon the village brings the woodman's tale
Of having heard the new-come nightingale.

An unpublished poem by JOHN CLARE.

WHERE SHE IS NOW

Where she is now, I cannot say—

The world has many a place of light:
Perhaps the Sun's eyelashes dance

On hers, to give them both delight;

Or does she sit in some green shade,

And then the air, that lies above,

Can with a hundred pale blue eyes

Look through the leaves and find my Love?

Perhaps she dreams of life with me,

Her cheek upon her finger-tips:

O that I could leap forward now,

Behind her back, and with my lips

Break through those curls above her nape,

That hover close and lightly there—

To prove if they are substance, or

But shadows of her lovely hair.

W. H. DAVIES.

REVIEWS

"JUSTUM ET TENACEM"

LIFE OF LORD COURTNEY. By G. P. Gooch. (Macmillan. 18s. net.)

WITH Lord Courtney there passed away, in the spring of 1918, almost the last survivor of a great tradition. It was the tradition of John Stuart Mill, of Fawcett, of Leslie Stephen, of Henry Sidgwick, the tradition of reason, conscience and liberty. It is not often, nor for long in history, that men like these are permitted to play a part in public life. They are like the platonic philosopher, distasteful alike to the despot, the oligarch and the mob, and doomed, in most states of society, to a precarious and private existence. It is to the credit of the Victorian age, to which young men now look back with a mixture of admiration and aversion, that it not only bred such men, but allowed them to be its counsellors. It is hardly conceivable that a contemporary Courtney should achieve either a seat in Parliament or a hearing.

He stood, we said, for reason, conscience and liberty—an inseparable triad. Let us illustrate from a sketch by Mr. Basil Williams:

In his intense passion for truth and right he seems to have regarded his chief mission as a public man to be that of exposing woolly-mindedness and ill-digested ideas from which he believed most of the misery and evils of the world originated. But in private he was singularly tolerant. He was always anxious that anybody should explain himself and give his views uninterrupted. I remember one Sunday afternoon I was stating a view on some point and somebody interrupted before I had finished. "Let the man explain himself," he exploded in his grim half-humorous way.

There is the whole spirit of Socrates. Truth and clear thinking alone can save Man; and truth is to be sought by tolerance. Thus, in the midst of the war, when passion ruled supreme, and every traditional liberty of England was thrown to the wolves, it was Lord Courtney who made this plea for conscientious objectors:

John Bright once quoted George Wither the Puritan,

There is on earth a yet auguster thing,
Veiled though it be, than Parliament or King.

That was the conscience of man. They spoke of Parliament and King in those days, as you speak of the State, as supreme in every action and thought of the citizen. I thank God there are citizens who refuse that kind of servitude. . . I am not of the creed of the conscientious objector. But I do at least apprehend the position of these martyrs, for they are no less, who go on expanding the liberty of the human soul, leading it up to a higher development and a higher civilisation of which we petty wanderers on the plain never think.

From this service to reason and conscience it followed that Lord Courtney was a liberal, in that proper sense of the term which is independent of political party. In an interesting and generous appreciation Mr. Amery—an opponent, but an admirer—says:

Lord Courtney represented, in its most clear-cut and uncompromising form, the liberal individualism of the mid-Victorian age, with its unquestioning faith in free trade, its dislike of all forms of State action, its disbelief in the British Empire, its wholehearted pacifism. Compared with him, Cobden, Bright, or Morley were not infrequently backsliders, and Gladstone a mere trimmer.

That is true. But Courtney's liberalism was deeper than anything political. It was founded in his soul. "The liberal cause cannot perish," he said, "unless the aspirations of human nature cease." There is the fundamental point. Those who believe in the free and developing life of the mind and soul as the purpose and test of all political institutions are liberal by conviction, to whatever party they may belong, and whatever, from time to time, may be their judgments on particular and immediate problems. Courtney was a liberal in that sense. And it was because he believed that Socialism and Empire were the enemies of that liberty that he was opposed to both.

As for Socialism, it hardly appears that he grasped all the implications of the movement. He seems to have thought of it as a kind of extended outdoor relief for paupers, an encouragement to men to cease working and live upon doles from the community. His position was that of the Poor Law reformers of 1834. He was never able, so far as the evidence contained in the "Life" shows, to apprehend the Socialist case against society—that it is radically unjust because it gives to what Mr. Tawney calls "functionless property" the principal wealth and the principal power, without exacting any kind of personal service in return. Nor was he willing to allow his imagination to play about the possibilities of a social organization in which the root principle of individualism, that property should be the reward of labour, would really be carried through. In all this region he was more conservative and less hopeful than his master Mill.

Whether a Socialist society is possible, and whether, if established, it would increase or diminish liberty, is the principal controversy of our time. But it cannot be said that Lord Courtney contributed to it, for his mind never opened to it. He thought the foundations of the economic order were laid once for all, and unshakable. In domestic questions the objects of his solicitude were sound finance and free trade. The latter, however, was to him also an international issue. He disliked the idea of a self-sufficing State.

I venture to say that it is not by living alone and making ourselves independent of our fellows, but by living with them and making us all dependent on one another, that true progress will be realised. . . The ideal of a self-sufficient British Empire, wholly independent of other nations, isolated and content with its isolation, is to me repugnant rather than attractive. Free trade, it has long been recognised, tends, however slowly, to the establishment of a community of the world; and I repudiate Mr. Chamberlain's schemes because, instead of this vision, they point to an ideal of separated interests and antagonistic ambitions.

How just this view was the world-war was tragically to prove. For it was, in one of its most important aspects, a war of economic imperialisms. The conception of the self-sufficing State leads, under modern conditions, inevitably to war; for it is only by bringing under its political dominion all its markets and its sources of raw material that a State can be independent of the foreigner; and if all great States pursue that same purpose they must come into conflict.

Of imperialism of every kind, economic or other, Lord Courtney was an uncompromising opponent. In South Africa he took his stand against the first annexation of the Transvaal in 1877. "The Government has just annexed an independent republic in South Africa. It may be said that it will involve no risk; but to that I reply, Wait till the end." The end was to be the Boer War. And at every stage of the drama leading up to that catastrophe Lord Courtney's warning voice was heard. The annexation of 1877 had been defended on the ground that it was the only way of preventing a native war. It was immediately followed by the great war with the Zulus. The Boers, it was pretended, were in favour of the measure, and that in spite of the fact that a memorial opposing it was signed by 6,600 out of 8,000 of the adult male Boers. "The Government could not allow its policy to be influenced by plébiscites." It had therefore to be influenced by force. Majuba Hill followed, and Gladstone's decision to withdraw, which was hailed with enthusiasm by Lord Courtney:

I know no greater instance of Christian conduct on the part of any government in declaring that the shedding of English blood should not be avenged. I stamp as heathenish and horrible the assertion that we have been humiliated because we did not insist upon blood for blood. I say on the contrary that we have been glorified among nations.

But blood for blood was the creed of the imperialists and soldiers, and they were waiting their chance. They engineered the Jameson Raid. It was repudiated, on its failure, by the Colonial Secretary, but his connivance was suspected, and the suspicion was increased by the burking of a full inquiry. Lord Courtney was one of those who criticized the committee of investigation. Addressing a hostile and contemptuous House,

"Surely," he said, "a great error of judgment has been committed. It may be that this resolution will be rejected by a large majority.—(Ministerial cheers.)—That will not affect the judgment of posterity. Nor will it affect my judgment.—(Ironical cheers.)—Nor will it affect the judgment of millions of your fellow countrymen here. Nor will it affect the judgment of those foreigners abroad—(ministerial laughter)—of whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaks with British contempt."

The raid was but the prelude to the war. Lord Courtney fought its approach at every stage, and, when it came, was the grand tribune of that stubborn opposition which alone redeems the name of England in one of the most infamous episodes of her history.

If we try to get at the motives of his consistent opposition to imperial expansion they may be reduced to two heads. First, he believed generally in self-determination; although in the case of Ireland he was, until the last Home Rule Bill, a Unionist. Next, he saw that the continual expansion of the Empire was at once weakening England and exposing her to the hostility of other States.

We are distrusted [he wrote in 1894], if not detested, by every European Power, and we are weak with our swollen Empire. The weary Titan has become a Falstaff gorged beyond digestion, incapable of action. Why are we so distrusted and detested? What have we been doing during the last twenty years? Snatching at continents, pegging out claims, interfering as missionaries of order and peace and then settling down in permanent possession: in short, making up those two and a half million square miles of undigested Empire which satisfy so powerfully the Imperialistic instinct and reduce us to abject impotence.

If he thought that in 1894, what would he have thought in 1920?

We are thus brought to Lord Courtney's views on foreign policy. He was not a pacifist, if by that is meant a man who thinks war of all kind always wrong. He was ready to intervene by force against Turkey in 1877, and he thought national destruction better than national subjugation. But plainly as he grew older war became more and more terrible to him, and the occasions when it was either inevitable or justifiable seemed fewer and fewer. He was one of the earliest supporters of what afterwards came to be called a League of Nations.

I am tired of the constant presentation of the nations of the world as so many predatory hordes. I do not believe that is the real temper of the civilized nations of Europe. They are all more or less in genuine alarm at one another; and the nation that can first show some confidence that the best way to prevent attack is not to invite it by distrust will be glorified as the real pioneer in the formation of a league of peace.

That was in 1906. In the years that followed he watched with gathering anxiety the growing tension between two groups of Powers. But he never thought war "inevitable," and he was right. For the more the diplomacy of the period is studied, the clearer it becomes that the war was a blunder, not a crime; or, if a crime, then a crime of all States. On the question of the final responsibility Lord Courtney did not pronounce. But his open condemnation of British and French policy in Morocco and of the British refusal to abandon the right of capture at sea shows that he did not put the blame for the pre-war tension wholly on one State. And when the British white book revealing the diplomacy of the last ten days was published, he fixed at once on the famous dispatch (No. 123) in which Sir Edward Grey refused the German proposal to respect the neutrality of Belgium and the territorial integrity of France and her

colonies. "This dispatch is a terrible document; if you try to realize how its substance will be viewed by German public men to-day and by the sober judgment of all men ten to twenty years hence, one feels overwhelmed."

When the war broke out, Lord Courtney was 81 years old. He might well have thought, as others, younger than he, did, that he was exempt from taking part in the battle of opinion at home, so much more savage in temper than that of the soldiers at the front. But he was driven by his sleepless conscience, even at the height of the storm of violence and hate, to put in his plea for reason and reconciliation. He saw plainly, what younger Liberals failed to see, that the war was not one of Right against Wrong; and that, even if it had been, it could not settle that issue, which belongs not to arms, but to the mind and soul. Believing this, he believed that the best solution would be (in President Wilson's phrase) a "peace without victory," since victory by either side would lead, on the one hand to a struggle for recovery and revenge, on the other to a desperate clinging, at all cost, to what had been won. Thinking thus he pleaded in the House of Lords, as early as November, 1915, for a readiness to listen to suggestions of peace:

The question is whether there is not an alternative to this unceasing strife. I believe there is. The passion of national independence is glorious and well worthy of any sacrifice. I recognise all its claims. But the passion of national independence must in some way be reconciled, if civilization is to continue, with the possibility of international friendship; and unless you can see out of this war something which will lead to international friendship coming into alliance with and being supported by national independence you have nothing before you but a continued series of wars, hate after hate, extermination after extermination, from which you may well recoil. Is it not possible that this reconciliation should be effected; that there should be, so to speak, dovetailed into one another the fact of national independence and the fact of international friendship? The consummation of the tragedy is that precisely what we believe and say is believed and said in Germany, with the same sincerity and the same conviction as here. Inexcusably you will say, and I admit that to us it is very difficult to see sufficient reason on their part for that conviction and belief. Some Germans find it extraordinarily difficult to realise that we believe in the possibility of the terror against which we are fighting. Well, if that is a common error on both sides, I am led again to the conclusion that there must be surely some way out of the impasse in which we are landed, and we ought at least to show ourselves ready to accept any suggestion that can be offered of relieving us from such an anxiety.

"Astounding speech by a peace crank," was the comment of the *Daily Express*. And his words fell on deaf ears. We went on to victory. And all the omens point to the fulfilment of Lord Courtney's prophecy.

A character so unbending, an intellect so strong, an integrity so unshakable, may seem to suggest a cold and unattractive personality. But that would be an error; for it was from passion and love that his principles and his conduct derived. It will be well, therefore, to close with the words of one who knew him not as a politician, but as a friend. Speaking of his love of poetry, she says it

always seemed to me to be part of his personality and not merely a literary enjoyment. That is why his reciting was so wonderful. The lines would come as if he were freshly creating them, and every shade of feeling and thought would be rendered by his voice. . . . I remember well one windy day, some years ago, walking along the edge of a wood with him. Suddenly, with a toss of his head, and a flinging up of his arm, he began Shelley's "West Wind." As he proceeded he became carried away, wildly gesticulating, and shouting at the top of his voice, and looking, with his rugged features, like the very spirit of the wind.

One hesitates, in these days of extravagant and therefore weak language, to fling about the word "great." But if the word may be applied, in a special sense, to men in public life, and if it be admitted that, in that field, public spirit, independence and courage count for more than originality or profundity of intellect, then it must be applied to Lord Courtney. He was the man of Horace's

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great ode: "Si fractus illabatur orbis Impavidum
ferient ruinae."

In Mr. Gooch Lord Courtney has found an admirable
biographer. His wide and exact knowledge of con-
temporary politics is always felt in the background and
never obtruded. He lets his hero speak for himself, and,
what cannot have been easy, suppresses his own judgments
and opinions. G. L. D.

THE PLANTATION AND ITS FRUITS

THE IRISH REBELLION OF 1641, WITH A HISTORY OF THE EVENTS
WHICH LED UP TO AND SUCCEEDED IT. By Lord Ernest
Hamilton. (Murray. 21s. net.)

LORD ERNEST HAMILTON, we imagine, set out
with the laudable intention of writing a history
of the bloodiest of Irish risings from the sworn
depositions of eye-witnesses in the library of Trinity
College. He then found that the rebellion would have
little meaning for readers unfamiliar with Irish history
unless it were preceded by an account of Sir Cahir
O'Dogherty's revolt and the Plantation of Ulster. Then,
once embarked on the Civil Wars which broke out ere the
rebellion was quenched, there was no suitable halting
place before Cromwell's campaign of 1649-50. The result
is a valuable but somewhat ill-balanced work, the two
rebellions, the small and the great, being dealt with on a
scale altogether disproportionate to that of the constructive
work of Arthur Chichester. And so we must continue
to wait for a history of the Plantation.

If we can bring ourselves to look upon Ulster as it
appeared to the eyes of the Lord Deputy, the Plantation
seems reasonable enough. Tyrone and Tyrconnel were
gone for ever. Most of the chiefs that remained were little
better than savages. They could be held by no oath, and
they had no desire but to continue the old feudal régime
of rapine and bloodshed in which they were born. The
stabilizing of the country by the introduction of colonists
of tougher fibre and greater industry must have appeared
to Chichester, as it certainly did to James I. and Salisbury,
as a great stroke of statecraft. In some of the counties,
such as Fermanagh, little injustice was done to the natives,
but their treatment in Coleraine (Londonderry), where
they were driven to mountain and bog to make way for
the rapacious Londoners, cannot be justified even by
contemporary political morals, and was undoubtedly an
important factor in the horror of thirty years later.

Lord Ernest Hamilton has treated the rebellion very
fully, and has employed much material not before pub-
lished. The adjective "sickening" was very frequently
used of atrocities in the late war. We can only say that,
as regards ourselves, it has seldom been so nearly literally
true as in the case of one incident here recorded. The
savagery that was let loose in those three years was like
a disease that had been long incubating, nourished by
injustice on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other.
In all, so far as can be judged, upwards of twenty thousand
British perished in Ulster, either by massacre or by exposure.

Perhaps the most significant, though by no means the
most horrible incident is that of Stephen Reeves, aged six,
murdered by six Irish boys, all under eight years of age,
who first gouged out his eyes, then battered out his brains
with sticks and stones. That is race-hatred. We have
often wondered, standing amid the ruins of that Tully
Castle where Rory Maguire committed the vilely trea-
cherous murders recorded by Lord Ernest, whether Ireland
was ever to have a future in which that hatred would
be forgotten.

The chapters devoted to the Civil Wars cover ground
that has been more often covered before, but Lord Ernest
Hamilton has made a brave attempt to unravel that knot

of conflicting motives that makes the period so hard to
comprehend. If he has not quite succeeded, he has the
comfort that nobody else ever has, and that there is little
probability that anyone ever will. The situation in 1649,
with Coote holding Derry for the Parliament, besieged
by a mixed army of Ulster Covenanters under Sir Robert
Stewart, and native Irish Roman Catholics under Monro,
who claimed to be fighting for Charles II., with Owen Roe
O'Neil, of all men in the world, moving North to raise the
siege in the name of the Parliament, is nightmare history.
But it is, in fact, nightmare history from first to last, a
ghastly heritage, whose potency for evil the last few weeks
in Derry have shown. C. F.

THE IMPARTIAL SUFFERER

AN ENGLISH WIFE IN BERLIN. By Evelyn, Princess Blücher.
(Constable. 18s. net.)

THE Princess Blücher's diary of the war is interesting,
but it is, at the same time, a little disappointing,
or, rather, it would be a little disappointing if we
had not already learned to criticize our own war-emotions.
We might have expected the surroundings of an English-
woman in Berlin during the war to have been, if not
horrible, then at least strange to us. We might not have
expected them to be very like, in essentials, the surroundings
of a German woman in London. We say in essentials,
for there was, of course, the difference that the Princess
Blücher lived in an atmosphere of German patriotism
instead of an atmosphere of English patriotism. But that
did not change the essentials. In either case a war-fevered
population was fighting for an indescribably noble cause
against a horde of indescribably brutal opponents. That
was the dominant feeling to which life had to be accom-
modated. The whole "setting" of this book, therefore,
is wearisomely familiar; we are merely called upon to inter-
change the words Germany and England.

But the interest is provided by the fact that the author,
being an Englishwoman, cannot accommodate herself to
her surroundings. It is not a simple case of pure opposi-
tion. It is not that she has the same emotions as the
Germans, but interchanges the objects of them. Although
she is married to a German husband and lives in Berlin,
she cannot think of the English as "the enemy" with the
passionate simplicity of the German patriot; and because
she is married to a German husband and lives in Berlin,
she cannot think of the Germans as "the enemy" with the
passionate simplicity of the English patriot. As a con-
sequence, the war appears to her primarily as a futile and
bloody mess. She has no theories about its origins, and
betrays no belief in its aims; she seems, indeed, to be
unconscious that it has any aims. But she has a very good
idea of what it is; she knows that large numbers of English
and German men are trying to kill one another, and that
several people who are dear to her are in grave danger
as a result. She knows that, however it has come about,
there is a great deal of abominable suffering in the world,
and she conceives it to be her simple duty to try to lessen
it. She is horrified at the thought of the English wounded
in hospital ships being drowned by German submarines,
and she is horrified at the thought of the German women
and children being slowly starved by England's blockade.
But she is not, of course, so equally poised the whole time.
The Germans treated her with much more consideration
than the English treated their aliens, but she had many
little snubs and discourtesies to endure. And, after all,
"once an Englishwoman always an Englishwoman,"
and her heart turned to her own country. She can never,
however, adopt the simple alternatives of the English-
woman in London, and this inability makes her account
of the war peculiarly horrible. For, unless we adopt simple
black and white alternatives, the war becomes meaningless
and the world a madhouse.

SPIRITUALISM AND PROBABILITY

SPIRITUALISM: ITS PRESENT-DAY MEANING: A SYMPOSIUM.

Edited by Huntly Carter. (Fisher Unwin. 18s. net.)

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SPIRITUALISM. By W. Whately Smith. (Kegan Paul. 3s. 6d. net.)

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE PICTURE. Edited by Percy Dearmer. (Nisbet. 3s. 6d. net.)

THERE can be no doubt that, for many people, the world of Victorian science is growing more and more unsubstantial. Both in its estimate of man and in its estimate of the external universe the science of Huxley's day is now regarded as too limited, too definite—too materialistic, as people say. Many different lines of inquiry and speculation have conspired to bring about this change, but we may divide them roughly into two classes. On the one hand we have the rise of psychology, particularly the psychology of the unconscious, with its vague, but impressive, enlargement of our conception of human personality; and on the other hand we have the growing popularity of Eastern systems of philosophy since they first became accessible to students through a series of admirable translations. The Western mind, as we see from the popularity of Kant and Schopenhauer amongst the moderns, already had a strong natural tendency to obscure the rigid Victorian distinction between the human mind and the exterior universe, and it speedily discovered that a little courage was all that was needed in order to accept the bolder obliterations congenial to Eastern thought.

The chief effect of these two tendencies on the average mind is to induce a stimulating feeling of confusion and mystery; the world becomes a place where nothing is what it seems and where anything may happen. In such a soil it is natural that Spiritualism should flourish. It must be noticed that while we regard psychology and philosophy as causes of the modern attitude towards Spiritualism, we do not say that there is any logical connection between them. If we are to judge by Mr. Carter's symposium neither the psycho-analysts nor the adepts in Eastern philosophy look very kindly on Spiritualism; the latter experts, indeed, adopt what we can only describe as a "superior" attitude. But the emotional effect of a vague acquaintance with these things is to increase credulity. In comparatively few cases does the believer accept Spiritualistic claims on the evidence. In most cases his philosophy enables him to regard these claims as probably true in the absence of any evidence whatever. He probably already believes in human immortality and in the existence of mind apart from brain. Probably he has also a vaguer idea that a "material" brain, and even time and space, are, in some way, illusions. His conception of the marvellous is therefore very different from that of the ordinary rationalist, and his conception of satisfactory evidence in Spiritualistic phenomena much less strict.

In this symposium the reader will notice the very different standards of evidence possessed by the various writers and the extent to which these prepossessions determine their attitudes; actual analysis of the evidence is very rare. The actual facts upon which so much belief, half-belief and disbelief profess to be based seem to be contained, very largely, in a few papers published in the Proceedings of the Psychical Research Society. Nearly all the rest of the evidence referred to by Spiritualists is open to fairly obvious alternative explanations. It is claimed for the solid nucleus to which we refer that it defies alternative explanations. This is a very difficult claim to substantiate. The researches into the psychology of the unconscious which have widened our conception of the possible have also provided us with some very powerful and flexible types of "explanation." The present task of the Spiritualist is to produce phenomena which cannot be

explained by fraud, malobservation, or those enlarged activities of the living person that the psychologists have presented to us.

Mr. Whately Smith, who is inclined, on the whole, to believe that communication with the dead has been established, shows very clearly the difficulty of substantiating this claim. He gives some very remarkable instances of the operations of the subconscious mind, and shows that phenomena are produced by it which exactly resemble the phenomena on which many Spiritualists confidently base their case. Nevertheless, he thinks that there is a residuum of evidence which does not admit of these alternative explanations; it is not conclusive, but it is, he thinks, just enough to turn the scale. Amongst his own prepossessions he mentions a belief in human immortality on philosophical and religious grounds. His book is a sober, well-reasoned, really valuable contribution to the question.

"The Fellowship of the Picture" consists of a number of connected essays, "automatically" written down by Mrs. Dearmer. They profess to be the work of a dead friend who had already made valuable contributions to religion and philosophy. Automatic writing is, of course, the least convincing amongst the evidences of human survival of death. Automatic writing is, in fact, one of the favourite occupations of the subconscious self. As evidence of being more than that, it is necessary that the messages evince knowledge which cannot possibly be in the possession of the medium, cannot be suggested by other living people, and cannot be the result of reasonable deduction. And in considering the equipment of the medium and of those in contact with her, we must take into account the remarkable powers of the subconscious. We find nothing in the present communication which affords any ground for supposing that Mrs. Dearmer's subconscious mind was not perfectly capable of inventing the whole of it. It consists in a number of reflections on religion and morality which would not have appeared to us remarkable, even if Mrs. Dearmer had written them with her conscious mind.

It is difficult to preserve an "open mind" on Spiritualistic phenomena. Men's prepossessions range all the way from those that consider communication with the dead a "violation of the laws of nature" to those that regard it as not only possible but likely. The scientific course would seem to be to adopt alternative explanations wherever possible, although this is not logical. There are no *a priori* reasons, for instance, which enable us to deny that spirits can only communicate under conditions that make fraud possible. But if that were so, it would always be possible to attribute the phenomena to fraud. Opinion, in such a case, is purely dependent on one's sense of probability. The same alternative holds good when we invoke the subconscious as an explanation. And in this latter case could we not always say that we are making a discovery relating to the powers of the subconscious? If we adhere to this it seems that, at the most, we shall merely be called upon to choose between two marvels.

J. W. N. S.

BOOKS IN MANUSCRIPT. By Falconer Madan. (Kegan Paul. 5s.)—The second and revised edition of a thoroughly good handbook, by one who has for forty years or so been a leader in the science of librarianship, needs no more recommendation than its bare announcement. A work of reference which at once instructs and pleases seems rare enough nowadays; yet this is one, and to our taste the chapter on Literary Forgeries (for instance) is an excellent summary of the chief examples. Whether Mr. Madan is explaining how the wit of man can eject the subtil bookworm, how the scribe in the scriptorium signified his desire for a pagan work "scratching his ear in the manner of a dog," or how the fortunate may catalogue their MS. collections, he is clear and fluent. We shall have recourse to his volume with grateful confidence.

PROMETHEUS AND UTOPIA

THE "PROMETHEUS BOUND" OF ÆSCHYLUS REPRESENTED IN ENGLISH AND EXPLAINED.—THE "BIRDS" OF ARISTOPHANES CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO ATHENIAN POLITICS. By Edward George Harman. (Arnold. 10s. 6d. net each.)

EACH of these books is written to support a thesis which we cannot accept, yet each contains something whose value is independent of the thesis. In his discussion of the "Birds" Mr. Harman gives us a delightful and provocative outline of the history of Athens in the age of Pericles, shocking perhaps, but also stimulating to those of us who are adherents of the democratic orthodoxy of Grote and Bury. In his translations of the "Prometheus" he gives us not only a faithful rendering, but a poem. Indeed, the version preserves for us enough of the imaginative splendour of the original to make us almost impatient of the suggestion that this tragic pageant was originally designed to serve the purpose of political propaganda. Mr. Harman would have us believe that Zeus, in the "Prometheus" and the "Birds" alike, is meant to represent the Athenian Demos. Prometheus is the good conservative Æschylus, or perhaps his political hero Aristides. The fatal marriage with Thetis is the wedding of Athens and the sea, promoted by the naval policy of Themistocles. To make his theory probable Mr. Harman finds himself constrained to argue, ingeniously but unconvincingly, that the "Suppliants" is not the earliest, but among the latest of the extant plays. He is driven to assume that our "Prometheus" is an independent play, not part of the same trilogy as the "Luomenos." The known fact that in the latter play the wanderings of Heracles are described, he cites as evidence for his view. In a trilogy they would have constituted "an intolerable repetition" after the wanderings of Io. He is surely hypnotized by his thesis. It would be not only Greek but eminently Æschylean to narrate the wanderings of Io in one hemisphere in the first play, and then to balance them in the second by a tale of travel in the other.

But it is not on details that the reader's judgment will depend. Mr. Harman has supplied us with the best criticism of his theory when he says himself: "The appeal of Æschylus in the main current of the plot is democratic, that is addressed to the average man, and to seek remote interpretations of his play is to court delusion." It happens that the "Prometheus Bound" was written at a period resembling closely the present time, and we think the average man can grasp its meaning now without the aid of abstruse theory, as could the average Athenian survivor of the Persian wars.

Both the writer and his audience had close personal acquaintance with disaster—not the ordinary misfortunes of life, but cataclysms in which their homes had been destroyed, their holy buildings razed to the ground, their intellectual and economic life suspended. The psychology of the population which betook itself in the hour of its extremity to its wooden walls has its counterpart to-day. What impresses men most forcibly in war is the element of chance. It might have been this man that was killed, but fate chose that. It might have been Megara that was destroyed; it was Athens. Æschylus had felt this himself; so have other great minds, experienced in war—Napoleon, for example, though Thucydides is perhaps the closest and most striking parallel. And so in the "Prometheus" not only men and heroes are subordinate to fate. Zeus himself cannot avoid it.

Chorus. Who then holds the helm of necessity?

Prometheus. The triple Fates and the remembering Furies.

Chorus. Is Zeus then inferior in power to these?

Prometheus. At any rate he cannot escape what is fated.

Again and again Hephæstus, Force, and later Oceanus insist on the power of Zeus, and then we find even the god

of the gods, the tyrant of heaven, unable to escape his destiny. It is the regular idiom of Greek. "Zeus is more powerful than Hephæstus, Destiny more powerful than Zeus."

Poetically this Zeus represents the cataclysmic forces of blind nature. Prometheus is the spirit of human progress. The play is a tragic poem, not a morality; but so far as it has a moral, the moral is quite simple and universal. Æschylus is exhorting his countrymen not to give in. Man is under Destiny, but so is Zeus. Humanity will eventually get the mastery, fearful as will be the struggle, bitter as will be the disappointment, and crushing for the time being as will be the physical collapse. But Prometheus is the hero of the play. Human beings must still struggle. The effort may be productive of no immediate benefit, it will certainly bring in its train great suffering. But it must be endured.

Nor are we left without guidance as to the spirit by which we may be enabled to bear such a burden. In Hephæstus, kindness for Prometheus and his exclamation:

Strange is the tie of blood, and dread the bond of fellowship,

the first note of a recurrent theme is heard. Oceanus in his fashion will offer help. Prometheus in his own distress can care for Io. The exchange of sorrows between Io and Prometheus leaves us with a sense of rest and of content in spite of their agony. To our generation emerging from the war, all this rings true. We know that when other help fails, men and women find strength simply from one another. The sweet comradeship of the Ocean-maidens with Prometheus is so strong that they dare to face for him the terrors of Zeus.

SC.-J.

THE INFLUENCE OF PURITANISM. By J. S. Flynn. (Murray, 12s. net.)—The Duke of Wellington once regretted that the education of a peer of his acquaintance was vastly in excess of his ability to use it. It is with regret that we feel constrained to pass a similar judgment on the book Mr. Flynn has compiled. His reading, wide as it is, is in excess of his powers to use it profitably. He sets out with vague ideas on the varied content of Puritanism, with the natural result that he leaves us in a state of vagueness. Was it an ecclesiastical system? If so, what were its leading forms? Was it a creed or was it simply an atmosphere? There are answers to questions like these in the discursively interesting pages of the writer, but these answers are in no wise adequate.

It is obvious that Puritanism possesses an ancestry, and in his stray references to the Lollards this seems to strike Mr. Flynn. "But," he points out, "we may safely lay it down as a rule that wherever we can trace the democratic spirit in the State—and the prominence of the lay element in the Church—there you have Puritanism, under whatever old or new name it may be pleased to designate itself, or strange fellowship it may be found." Now Mr. Flynn makes agreeable remarks on such topics as the rise of thrift or the fall of slavery, and these he connects loosely with his theme. It does not, however, occur to him that he must definitely relate these topics with the influence of Puritanism. He could show, for example, that the individualism of the Reformation contributed to the emancipation of man from the particular society to which he had belonged. The old order had been the guild, the commune; the new order was the merchant, the citizen. The state of poverty was with the Mediaeval Church the sign of a saint; with the Puritans it was the mark of failure. Other-worldliness was no longer the motive. A good citizen of this earth was thus preparing for his citizenship in the New Jerusalem, and in the process the head of Charles I. suffered. The Puritan is a saved man, and his life on earth is as sacred as his life in heaven. Other-worldliness had rendered men indifferent to the secrets of the Universe, of the ground beneath them and the heavens above them. The author perceives that men had been so preoccupied with the Word of God that they had omitted to consider the works of God. The globe acquired a fascination for mankind hitherto unknown. Like Canning, the Puritans called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old. They possessed callings, but these callings concerned business as much as religion.

HUNTING THE FOX

HUNTING THE FOX. By Richard Greville Verney, Lord Willoughby de Broke. (Constable. 10s. 6d. net.)

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE might have been a successful minor politician, having as much to say as most politicians and a certain jolly eloquence in saying it that would have been worth at least an Under-Secretaryship to many. Without having altogether abandoned public life, he has built up a happier reputation. Since the death of Mr. John Watson he has been probably the most famous M.F.H. in Great Britain. And on fox-hunting his pronouncements are worth more than those of any Under-Secretary on the affairs of his department; for we never came across an Under-Secretary who wrote at once so pleasantly and so authoritatively on his own subject as Lord Willoughby de Broke on his.

Those of us, and there must be many, who before the war had occasional days with hounds and whose prospects of having them in future are dingy, can yet take pleasure in the fact that for others there is better fortune. Hunting is as firmly established as ever. It will recede from the suburbs of great towns, but in the country it has a long life before it. Agricultural prosperity, to which we have returned, was its best friend fifty years ago, and will be its best friend again. It is fitting that this should be so. Fox-hunting may be the sport of the few, though, if we count enthusiastic foot-people, it must give pleasure to hundreds of thousands in a year; but its importance is not in proportion to the numbers that take part in it. It is a traditional sport which is, we like to feel, bound up intimately with our national character, with our conception of ourselves and the conception others hold of us as a nation. And it is, as Lord Willoughby de Broke puts it, "the one field sport left in these islands . . . that in the face of modern luxury still calls for courage, endurance, decision and nerve."

In this essay, for it is little more, every aspect of fox-hunting has been dealt with, from the most technical duties of the Huntsman in field and kennel to the problems of horse-breeding and the training of young horses. The author has one dictum invaluable in these days when attempts are made to "brighten" hunting as they were made to "brighten" cricket. "Nothing tells in favour of the Fox so much as getting the Hounds' heads up." He insists that in many countries hounds are interfered with far too much, and that it is just in these countries that fewest tired foxes are killed at the end of good runs. He cordially dislikes "fancy" casts. In casting, the line should always be sought at the nearest possible point to where it has been lost, just as, in riding to a holloa, hounds should be laid on at the exact point where the fox has been sighted. The attempt in either case to gain ground and save time by making a wide circle farther on may win for a Huntsman a temporary reputation for brilliancy, but it will not pay in the long run.

There is an interesting chapter on the literature of the chase. Mr. Masfield's account of the Ghost Heath Run in "Reynard the Fox" receives unstinted praise both from the point of view of its technical knowledge and from that of its poetical merit as one of the great ballads of the countryside. But Lord Willoughby, a believer in the medium hound, suggests rather maliciously that the reason the good fox saved his brush was that Sir Peter Bynd's hounds, "great chested" and "broad in shoulder," lacked speed to pull him down.

The price may seem high for one hundred and forty pages, but every page is worth reading, and in days of indifferent paper and binding this beautiful little book is a delight to hold and to have.

C. F.

A JOURNALIST

TWELLS BREX: A CONQUEROR OF DEATH. By Hamilton Fyfe. (Cassell. 6s. net.)

TWELLS BREX was a journalist on the staff of the *Daily Mail*, and the present volume is a selection of his journalistic writings which Mr. Fyfe has loosely held together by scraps of biographical information. The chief impression we get from this material is that Twells Brex was a very likeable man. It is a pity that, in daily journalism, we cannot always see the man behind the writing. Twells Brex, for instance, was perfectly capable of expressing views which seemed identical with those of men that we knew to be base. He seemed, sometimes, to be fighting with all his strength for the powers of darkness, while the real truth was that he literally did not know what he was doing, and that he imagined he was attacking what he was, in effect, supporting. His political writings on the *Sporting Times*, for instance, doubtless gave great pleasure to many people that Brex would have detested. He afterwards came to see that what he was saying was not in the least what he meant, and we doubt whether this discovery was quite complete at the date of his untimely death. Brex was not, in fact, sophisticated. His emotions were those of a good man, but he was quite capable of attaching them to the wrong objects. In this he resembled the public for which he afterwards wrote with such conspicuous success. The ordinary British public can be persuaded to do very vile things, but almost invariably they have to be convinced that they are very good things. It is the process of conviction which is, alas! so easy. Huxley used to say that there was nothing wrong with the great heart of the people, but there was something considerably wrong with its weak head.

On subjects where all the necessary factors were accessible to him, on holidays, servants, waiters, Brex is always generous. He can be sentimental, but that, again, is only another form of his lack of sophistication. He does not realize the inadequacy of the *cliché* reflection, the *cliché* humour. Once more he is not saying quite what he means. He began to write rather late in life; he quickly learned those standardized methods of using language which form the technique of the ordinary journalist, and he lacked, perhaps the ability, perhaps the time, to effect the little individual and unique modifications which distinguish literature from journalism. A working journalist who wishes to develop an individual style has a hard task—as hard as that of a manageress who tries to turn a ready-made Lyons restaurant into something individual and unique. And in both cases it is the employer who says that customers will rebel at the change.

There is something heroic in the way Brex met his end, and his editor shows us how great a courage and patience went to the making of Brex's well-known last article. This was the time when one might have expected Brex to produce a little masterpiece, for he was, all through his illness, a great man. But although, knowing the facts in the background, we find Brex's last article moving, we do not find it an adequate expression of the emotion of its author. His mind does not escape the attraction of those old well-known ruts. It is impossible to read Mr. Fyfe's book without admiring and liking Brex and without reflecting that he paid a heavy price for being a journalist. For in so far as he was a journalist, he was inarticulate.

By way of supplement to his catalogue "The Literature of the Restoration," Mr. P. J. Dobell has now issued "Books of the Time of the Restoration"; and an extraordinary production it is, almost fantastic in its intimacy with the literary chaff of the period. Not that the greater writers are neglected; but here they jostle with the common crowd, and one may buy four or five first editions of Dryden or Marvell for one by our new acquaintance, Edmund Hickerlingill.

RATHER A GIVE-AWAY

DAISY ASHFORD: HER BOOK. By the Author of "The Young Visitors." (Chatto & Windus. 7s. net.)

WHILE realizing how difficult it must have been to resist—especially as the cupboard was not bare—we think that the author of "The Young Visitors" has been unwise to respond to the greedy public's desire for more. Her new book was bound to invite comparison with the other; it is not a patch on it; and, more than that, does it not remove a little of the bloom from what was surely the chief charm of the adventures of Mr. Salteena and Ethel—we mean their uniqueness? "The Young Visitors" was funny enough in all conscience, but the source of its funniness was that it was such a find. As we read, the picture was before us of the little girl making it up, saying the absurd things over to herself before she wrote them down with a very special kind of relish, and putting in the stops afterwards, especially the exclamation marks, with a heavy hand. But when Miss Ashford tells us in the preface to this new book that the first story was "dictated to my father, who took it down faithfully word for word," it is a very different affair. Likewise when she tells us that portions of her sister's story were dictated to her father and mother, "and I think the nurse had a hand in it too."

We do not doubt her sincerity for a moment, but was it possible for those grown-ups to refrain from getting all the fun they could from the amusing child; or could the child refrain, when she saw how they rolled their eyes, from playing down to them, from adding that couple of shrimps to the absurd enough afternoon tea? It is common and humiliating enough to see on the face of a baby a shade of contempt at the things these monsters titter and giggle over. "If you will think it is so very funny that I don't happen to know how babies come," we can almost imagine Angela Ashford saying, "I'll write you a whole story about it," and she proceeds to compose "The Jellus Governess." If we had not been told that nurse, especially nurse, helped with the writing out, we should have been more merry.

Perhaps the most amusing passage in this new book occurs in the first story, "Love and Marriage." A young gentleman is on his way to see his beloved.

Just as he was thinking of going up to her house he saw Norah Mackie and Evelyn Slattery coming along together.

"Your friend," they said chaffingly, "is picking some old geraniums in the front garden."

Burke stared at them straight, and, putting out his tongue once or twice, walked on to find his darling pet.

This, we feel, is a true contribution to the number of retorts one can make to a silly, and certainly intended to be rather insulting, remark of that kind.

The remaining stories were written between the ages of eleven and fourteen. They are, for the most part, very dull, and dreadfully like the vast number of novels written by ladies whose intellectual life seems to remain for ever in its early "teens." But—psycho-analysts, please note—it is surely strange for a child between these ages to occupy herself so passionately with the subject of courtship and marriage. The heavy, detailed descriptions of young gentlemen and their true loves read as though they were culled from the covers of servants' novelettes—those shiny, coloured covers that appear to have a rich varnish on them. In our experience the female child between those ages would have held such horrors in high contempt.

K. M.

THE current (June) number of the *French Quarterly* (Longmans, 3s. net) contains a note by the editors showing that M. Pierre Benoit's well-known novel "L'Atlantide," besides owing more than it should to Sir Rider Haggard's "She," is also unduly indebted to the same author's "Yellow God."

THE LUXURIOUS STYLE

LINDA CONDON. By Joseph Hergesheimer. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.)

IF a novel is to have a central idea we imagine that central idea as a lusty growing stem from which the branches spring clothed with leaves, and the buds become flowers and fruits. We imagine that the author chooses with infinite deliberation the very air in which that tree shall be nourished, and that he is profoundly aware that its coming to perfection depends upon the strength with which the central idea supports its beautiful accumulations.

But in the case of "Linda Condon" we have the impression that the author has planted something that never has time to take root, for he cannot resist the temptation to deck it with immediate branches, to clothe it with a multiplicity of exotic splendours. These are all very well in the first part of the book to gaze upon, to smell, to compel our astonishment; but at the end, at the moment when the harvest is to be gathered—ah, then—at that final moment which should be all compact of richness, we are confronted with a little dried-up, withered skeleton. Linda Condon, a small, grave young person aged ten, with ink-black hair, blue velvety eyes, cheeks like magnolia petals and lips carnation-red, is the embodiment of Mr. Hergesheimer's conception. There is that in her circumstances and in her behaviour which puts us in mind very vividly of Mr. Henry James's little Maisie. Like her, for all her appearance of being adequate to the strange situation, Linda is innocent of all evil; with the same touching and confiding air of understanding everything, she accepts her surroundings. Life is a drifting from one odious *hôtel de luxe* to another, from one odious gentleman *de luxe*, who is mamma's friend of the moment, to another. For Linda's mother is a gay, golden-haired woman of pleasure, whose days are divided between the mirror, eating, and railing against men, and whose nights are devoted to getting what she can from "the beasts," and keeping her spirits up with drink. She is a vivid representation of the warm-hearted, vulgar, over-blown animal with whom contemporary fiction has made us as familiar as we wish to be, and the touch or two of strangeness which is apparent is due to the author's precision of detail. Until the age of fourteen Linda is her blind, adoring handmaid, but then, on an afternoon when her mother speaks to her "sensibly" on the subject of marriage, she has for the first time a vague intimation of feelings which she cannot account for or explain away. These feelings recur, and the author reveals what we have called his central idea at a studio orgy, where in the contemplation of a cast of the Winged Victory side by side with a leering Chinese God it is explained to her that the one stands for the world of spirit and the other for lust. This time Linda is troubled with a rushing of wings and a feeling as if she were up among the stars.

"I have left Lao-tze for Greece," said the sculptor to whom she confessed her vision, and she is his inspiration forthwith. It is through him that Linda discovers that she is not a living woman; she cannot love. It is as though, while she walked in the midst of those dangers that thronged her childhood, an icy finger had touched her, chilled her, so that she would always in experience and feeling remain a child. "This child I to myself shall take." But the Spirit of Beauty, in claiming her, has taken its revenge on life as well. True, the child (and now we mean that mystical child whom life is for ever threatening) has been saved, but only at the cost of keeping her a child for ever. This takes one hundred and fifty pages to tell—half the book. The scene has been any sumptuous hotel, and after the marriage of Linda's mother, the house of a wealthy New York business man. There is no important

difference between these settings. Either is equally rich in descriptive matter, and it is his passion for registering every pink-silk box of black chocolates, every cocktail, bath extract, perfume, sugared fig, quilted bed cover, web of lingerie, that in our opinion at first obscures, and finally smothers, Mr. Hergesheimer's central idea. Great brilliant chunks of this repulsive world of the very rich are hurled at us until Linda is scarcely visible, is pale as a pocket-handkerchief. And then, with the second half of the book, which tells of Linda's marriage and later life, we have the uncomfortable sensation all this does not matter. It is not as though the author has anything more to tell us about Linda; he can only prove, with her marriage, her absence of feeling for her children, her lack of response to her husband, her vague repetition of the old dream of stirring wings, that thus it is and ever shall be. It is a great pity that Mr. Hergesheimer has not faced the difficulties of a more reluctant and a more precious harvest.

K. M.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

AN IRISH PEER ON THE CONTINENT (1801-1803): being a narrative of the tour of Stephen, 2nd Earl Mount Cashell, through France, Italy, &c., as related by Catherine Wilmot. (Williams & Norgate. 10s. 6d. net.)—The editor of this narrative must be fond of peers, for the noble earl hardly deserves a place on the title-page, much less the title. The book belongs entirely to Catherine Wilmot, a garrulous, delightful young Irishwoman, with a sense of humour, a gift of vivid style, and a keen instinct for personalities. If she gives us no impression of Lord Mount Cashell, that is, we are convinced, because his lordship was precisely a nonentity; and since he did not even perform his obvious function of paying Catherine's expenses—those were met by a legacy "too big to spend on trifles and too small to invest"—we can see no reason why he should be given prominence in the affair.

It is Catherine, then, who should have all the credit. The Grand Tour is what you make of it; and she made a great deal. She has, for instance, left us an unforgettable picture of Talleyrand, at whose side she dined in Paris:

At a distance, his Face is large, pale, and flat, like a Cream Cheese, but on approaching nearer, cunning and rank hypocrisy supplant all other resemblances. On sitting down to dinner, he spoke on different subjects politely enough and mentioned his having been in England, on the presumption of my being an Englishwoman; I told him I was Irish, and the word seemed to revive some remembrance of successful perfidy. For when he repeated with surprise "Comment! Mademoiselle est Irlandaise," a diabolical gleam lit the expanse of his face with such a smile as I desire never to see, as long as I live, again. Just then, after dismissing his soup, he enter'd with interest upon his dinner, and certainly such a gourmandeur never before was it my fate to behold. For the length of two hours his mouth was never closed, and even at the intervals of plate-changing he filled up crevices by demolishing a dish of raw Artichokes, in his neighbourhood.

We admit that Talleyrand is Catherine's *chef-d'œuvre*; but there are pictures almost as vivid of Tom Paine in his Paris garret, his mechanical models, his face red with spirits, his charming love-letters sent to every woman he met; of Mr. Pointzett, "the double-refined American, with feelings all too rarefied for use"; of Robert Emmet with his youth, his nervous enthusiasm, his perpetually changing colour; and of Alfieri, leaning silent against the mantelpiece in Countess Albany's house in Florence. For these we are grateful to the piety which has preserved the manuscript so long and given it to the world.

THE ANNALS AND ANTIQUITIES OF RAJASTHAN. By Lieut.-Col. James Tod. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by William Crooke, C.I.E. 3 vols. (Oxford University Press. 52s. 6d. net.)—Once more we are the debtors of the Oxford Press. A new edition of Tod's

"Annals" has been long awaited, for it is one of those minor classics which he who has once been introduced to them treasures as a peculiar possession. It is a book, moreover, which has been exceedingly difficult to obtain. And if the present edition has not the charm of the generous quarto with the beautiful pictures which Tod's true lovers cherish, it has a very fine commentary by Mr. Crooke.

Tod's "Annals" is an amazing work by an amazing man. For Tod's work in India was over before he was forty. In a dozen years this young enthusiast had restored Rajputana, made a desert by Mahratta oppression and the ravages of the Pindaris, to prosperity. He left India under a cloud of suspicion raised by his very success; for the man who works miracles is generally accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub. The remaining thirteen years of his life—he was born in 1782 and died in 1835—were devoted to the arrangement and completion of the "Annals" and the posthumous "Travels in Western India." The "Annals" are the work of one of the greatest of those unrequited enthusiasts who have always distinguished the British service in India. His stories of Rajput chivalry make some of the finest romantic reading that exists in the English language. The "Annals" are more than a story book; Mr. Crooke's commentary plainly shows that even the wealth of exacter knowledge of Rajput history which has been gathered in the century since Tod wrote rather fills out than essentially disturbs the main lines of his historical exposition. Still, it was as a story book that the present writer had the good fortune to read the "Annals" in boyhood; and he can only hope that this new edition will give a new generation more frequent opportunities of the same discovery of delight.

A SCAVENGER IN FRANCE. By William Bell, A.R.I.B.A. (Daniel. 10s. 6d.)—Mr. Bell must be written as one that loves his fellow-men, and that hates bigotry to the point of being bigoted himself. For reasons which he does not specify, although he says that he found it impossible to kill, or even, in the making of munitions, to kill by proxy, he took no part in "the active cares of war," but volunteered for the work of salvage and reconstruction organized by the Friends' War-Victims' Relief Committee. In this way he began his war experience as a carpenter and joiner in the Jura, spending there a sort of working holiday in 1917. In November he was sent to the less ethereal atmosphere of the Somme. March 19, 1918, found him at Ham, observing with half a doubt the cheerful behaviour of the inhabitants—was it not the anniversary of the German retirement?—and enjoying the warm sun and the broad grounds of wheat and oats just sprouting. Two days later the vast German attack was roaring without a pause; the roads were mad with refugees and cows and goats and dogteams, tragi-comic waifs in the great torrents of war machineries. It is for his honest, passionate record of this exodus that this book chiefly deserves to be read. Afterwards Mr. Bell was farther removed from the noise of battle; could go to see Wilde's tomb in Paris, and find to his disgust that Epstein's sphinx had been piously mutilated; or, at Daudet's old windmill, might bitterly stigmatize the futile generosity which left it roofless while it erected a gewgaw monument a mile or so away.

He came to the same conclusions as Barbusse and Sassoon, and lays stress on the sexual demoralization of the soldier and on the effect of wage-slavery on the mentality of men in general. He ascribes the readiness of the average man to "shoulder his rifle and gas-mask" solely to modern industrialism, without any reference to the variety of contributory causes. He is, throughout, so convinced of his opinions that he does not see how anyone can possibly disagree with them. But the rapidity of his style and the sympathy of his nature greatly atone for his dogmatism.

MARGINALIA

FOR some months now, with a few intermissions occasioned by pressure of other business or satiety, I have been devouring the works of Balzac. But "devouring" is too noble and leonine a word. Confronted with the "Comédie Humaine," one feels like a very small mouse in presence of an enormous moon-like cheese. One gnaws and nibbles, loses courage, sharpens one's teeth and returns heroically to one's task, and finally, after a long, long time, one has the satisfaction of seeing that the monstrous moon is perceptibly smaller. Another six years, one ventures to hope, and the feat will have been accomplished. But the accomplishment will have required unflagging patience and an undiminished appetite.

But it is not so much of Balzac that I wish to write as of the Balzacian novel in general. Why is it, one wonders, that there have been so few attempts since Balzac's day to imitate the "Comédie Humaine"? In France, practically the only novelist who has set to work with any degree of system to write a social history of his epoch is Zola. In England there has been nobody remotely answering to Balzac. Why? we ask again. One reason is sufficiently obvious. To write a "Comédie Humaine" one needs to have a mind that possesses an enormous superficial area of sensitiveness. Balzac's most remarkable mental quality was this: that he was sensitive to an extraordinary number of different phases of life at the same time. Minds of this type are not common. Nor are Comédies Humaines. But it is possible, I believe, to find in external circumstances another explanation for the fewness of the attempts to rival Balzac, and an explanation, at the same time, of the fact that England has produced no system of social novels that comes anywhere near to rivaling the Frenchman's grandiose plan.

Balzac's favourite novelist was Sir Walter Scott; and the fact is of some significance. For Balzac's method in the "Comédie Humaine" is the method of the historical novel applied to contemporary life. Looking back over the annals of the past, it is easy to detect the significant form of any given epoch; it is easy, when one can telescope years into seconds, to make slow and obscure changes seem vivid to emphasize the picturesque contrasts between age and age. It is far easier to write an account of England in 1520 than of England in 1920. Of the earlier England one knows everything of significance; of the other almost nothing. But there occur every now and again periods of history when change is so violent and rapid, contrasts so palpably gross, that even contemporaries cannot fail to see what is significant in their own epoch. Such an age invites a social novelist to turn it into historical fiction; it forces upon him the conception of a complete picture. He cannot but think historically.

The age of Balzac was precisely one of those periods. Born a year before the new century, he learned from his elders the story of the Revolution and of the life that preceded it; with his own eyes he saw the glory and downfall of Napoleon. He lived through the Restoration and the Monarchy of July, and in his latest years beheld the birth of the Second Republic. In his half-century of life he had witnessed the invention of the steam engine with its industrial consequences, the discovery of advertisement, the re-discovery of Christianity and many other new and surprising things. For a man like Balzac, for whom the essence of art was chiaroscuro, violent and picturesque contrast, the first half of the nineteenth century in France was a perfect subject. He and his epoch between them

produced the "Comédie Humaine." But suppose Balzac had been an Englishman. Would he, one wonders, have found in the comparatively calm and undramatic development of England in the nineteenth century the necessary stimulus? The fact that no English novelist of the nineteenth century attempted to do what Balzac did seems to point to the conclusion that to an Anglicized Balzac the notion of the "Comédie Humaine" would never have occurred.

Nothing is unsafer, but nothing, at the same time, is more amusing, than to lay down the law. Shall we then hazard the generalization that in times of slow development the social historian-novelist of the Balzac type will be unknown. In times of rapid and dramatic change he will find the stimulus required to bring him into existence. Even in Zola's time French history, though it lacks the picturesqueness of the Napoleonic era, is still a great deal more dramatic and highly coloured than the contemporary history of England.

By every right, according to our modest little literary law, the war of 1914 and the revolutions by which there seems every prospect of its being followed should produce a new Balzac who shall record in fiction the whole social history of this astonishing period. Already the war, making history, as it did, with a dramatic violence which nobody but a blind and paralytic deaf-mute could fail to be conscious of, has produced a vast crop of novels that have recorded, with more or less subtlety, the changes in our habits of life and thought brought about by the catastrophe of 1914. The shock was so rude that every novelist became, for the time being, a social novelist; it was impossible to avoid taking the historical point of view. Sooner or later there will arise a larger mind—tentacular, as it were, with feelers spreading far and wide over the whole face of this epoch—and we shall get from it a new "Comédie Humaine." It will give us the history of our time written from within, a history that shall be true in the intimate immediate details and true in the broad significant outlines. It was possible to write such a history in France between 1830 and 1850. It has once more begun to be possible to-day, and possible not only in France but throughout all Europe. If Russia should ever again get enough food to allow her to think of anything but immediate animal needs, what fabulous reincarnations of Balzac may we not expect from her! A Balzac interested in the human soul, as the original Balzac, too easily content with the picturesque spectacle, with mere political movement, never was. Meanwhile there is nothing to do but to wait—patiently.

AUTOLYCUS.

THE MOSTYN SALE

MESSRS. SOTHERY sold Lord Mostyn's manuscripts (see *ATHENÆUM*, July 9, p. 52) on Tuesday, July 13. The chief prices were:—*L'Exile du Comte d'Artois*, 1331, £710. Bible, French, early 14th century, £390. Boccaccio, *Des Clercs et nobles femmes*, French, 15th century, with 93 miniatures, £880. J. Chartier, *Histoire des Rois de France*, 15th century, £320. Dante, *La Divina Commedia*, Italian, early 15th century, £1,500. *La Vie d'un très noble Prince de Galles (the Black Prince)*, late 14th century, £390. Gospels from Thorney Abbey, Hunts, 10th century, £620. Gospels, English, 10th century, with four large paintings of the Evangelists, £2,550. Froissart, *Chronicles*, French, 14th century, £2,950; another MS. of the same, early 15th century, £400. Herodianus, *Historiæ*, Italian MS., 15th century, with the arms of Innocent VIII., £250. *Histoire des Rois de France jusqu'en l'an 1223*, French, 14th century, £300. Horæ B.M.V., Netherlandish, 15th century, £355. J. Lydgate, *The Fall of Princes*, English MS., 15th century, £250. Life of Saint Edmund and of Saint Fremund, illuminated, £1,100. Life of the Virgin Mary, £200. N. de Lyra, *Postilla super Psalterium*, English, 15th century, £220. A. Munday, *The Book of John à Kent and Joh à Cumber*, holograph MS., £450. *Les Vœux du Paon*, French, 14th century, £600. The total of the sale was £17,965 19s.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

THE action of Mr. Cosmo Hamilton's clever story "His Friend and his Wife" (Hurst & Blackett, 7s. 6d. net) takes place at "Quaker Hill Colony, Connecticut," a locality tenanted during the summer months by wealthy "commuters," or business men who daily catch trains to and from the city. Their womankind live mostly on amicable terms with each other, but have amongst them an inveterate mischief-maker, whose devastating instincts find congenial material when a divorce suit arises within the colony. The woman in the case is cleared by the deliberate perjury of a girl whom she has formerly befriended, and returns to her husband "clothed in chastity," while the sharer of her adventure with some difficulty obtains forgiveness from his wife. This unstable peace is, however, disturbed by the exertions of the scandal-monger, and we have various explanatory scenes, resulting, apparently, in the satisfaction of all concerned.

"The Marriage of Elizabeth," by Ethel Holdsworth (Herbert Jenkins, 7s. net), has a fine and lifelike heroine, belonging to the upper stratum of the working-class. We find her convincing in every particular, except for the exuberant health and spirits, which, judging from observation, we regretfully believe to be incompatible with her unceasing and selfless activity. The peculiar conditions leading up to and following her marriage are ingeniously imagined, and described with much humour and an occasional touch of sincere pathos. But we think that the last portion of the book is too long drawn-out, and that the final reconciliation between husband and wife is needlessly deferred.

In "Who's that a-Calling?" (Stanley Paul, 7s. 6d. net) Miss Kate Horn is often powerful, and sometimes garish, but never for a moment dull. Dope-fiends, shell-shockers, Socialists, temporary gentlemen, mission-preachers and other latter-day types figure in these pages, and are drawn, for the most part, with remarkable understanding and sympathy. Miss Horn's vivid writing degenerates, oftener than we could wish, into melodrama. Yet these lapses are only momentary, and redeemed by flashes of insight and humour. The author presents some lurid scenes, but we fancy that in substance they are true to fact. And by way of set-off, she introduces us to several extremely nice people in various grades of society.

"The Dweller in the Half-Light," by Roger Wray (Odhams, 7s. 6d. net), fully justifies the publishers' claim that it is "a quite unusual story." The principal figure is, not an old-fashioned ghost, but something which imposes a far greater strain on human notions of the probable; a kind of dual self, to wit, endowed with an objective and half-materialized existence through the unconscious volition of a girl possessing the so-called mediumistic faculty in an abnormal degree. The creature is, mentally, a replica of herself, but in outward seeming resembles a lover whom she mourns as dead, and believes to be revisiting her in spirit form. This extraordinary situation has an element of the grotesque, and we are not prepared to accept the author's assertion that on scientific grounds it may be considered possible. But it is developed with considerable skill, and reaches an effective climax when the original lover returns home in the flesh, and comes face to face with his counterfeit. The scene is apparently laid in the Midlands, and suggests an Arnold Bennett atmosphere of boisterous and not over-refined efficiency, which throws into relief the eeriness of the central theme.

"The Little Soul," by Elinor Mordaunt (Hutchinson, 8s. 6d. net), is what old-fashioned people call a very unpleasant book, and we so far belong to the old school as to believe that this degree of unpleasantness in fiction can only be justified by a stronger motive, ethical or artistic, than is manifest here. Mrs. Mordaunt surfeits us with illegitimate births and the measures designed to prevent them. She ranks herself, however, decisively on the side of the angels, and often gives proof of imaginative power. The Derbyshire household which entertains an angel of the wrong kind unawares in the person of an evilly disposed tutor is composed of striking personalities, and forms an impressive whole. The conditions of rural life in wartime are sympathetically but not sentimentally described; and the amusing sketches of country society have a convincing quality not usual in novels. The psychic part of the story seems to us neither very good nor very bad.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE *Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1820, contains a notice of "An Inquiry on the Duty of Christians with respect to War," by John Sheppard. The author, whose name was perhaps a little unfortunate, is described as writing "ably in support of defensive war," and the reviewer remarks that "a Military Institution is no more than a Police Establishment against foreign aggression: and an indispensable necessity as long as vice presses violence into its service." From volume 2 of "Chefs d'Œuvres [six] of French Literature," noticed in the same number, the following epigram, by Jean Baptiste Willart de Grécourt, is quoted:

La Grâce si féconde en fameux personnages,
Que l'on vante tant parmi nous,
Ne put jamais trouver chez elle que sept sages;
Jugez du nombre de ses fous.

The "Select Poetry" includes pieces by Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, clerk in a Woodbridge bank, friend of Southey and Charles Lamb, and father-in-law of Edward Fitzgerald; and by John Abraham Heraud, who later on was dramatic critic of THE ATHENÆUM. Theatrical matters languished in July, 1820. Drury Lane Theatre closed for the season on the 8th of the month, and Covent Garden followed suit on July 17. At the "little theatre in the Haymarket" a farce ascribed to Theodore Hook, and entitled "Oil and Vinegar," was performed for two nights only. Described as a musical drama in three acts, and seemingly a hotch-potch from Chaucer, and Beaumont and Fletcher, "Woman's Will, a Riddle," said to be by Mr. C. T. Swift, had a favourable reception at the English Opera-House (the Lyceum). Various pieces were performed also at the Surrey Theatre (under Dibdin's auspices), and at the Cobourg, now the "Old Vic."

An article in the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1820, relates to Samuel Weller Singer's edition of the "Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters of Books and Men," collected by the Rev. Joseph Spence, the friend of Alexander Pope; to Edmund Malone's edition of the "Anecdotes," published independently on the same day; and also to a "Letter," with reference to the character of Pope, addressed to Thomas Campbell by the Rev. W. L. Bowles (author of the sonnets which were the inspiration of Coleridge's youth), who for his unfairness to the bard of Twickenham was attacked by Byron. Bowles is castigated in the article, which—largely a defence of Pope—contains the words, "Pope wrought to its last perfection the classical vein of English poetry," and thus concludes: "Time, who will injure so many of our poets, will but confirm the immortality of Pope." A review, in the same periodical, of the Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, begun by himself and concluded by his daughter Maria, is readable, but somewhat severe to Edgeworth, who is described as "the hero of five marriages, two of them clandestine, another of them irregular, and the last three indecently hasty." The most noteworthy thing in the article is the amusing picture of Edgeworth's friend Thomas Day, the author of "The History of Sandford and Merton," who is designated by the reviewer as "one of the most extravagant characters that England, fertile in oddities, has produced." In sober truth, Day seems to have been an amiable reformer, in educational and other matters, and addicted to the simple life. The facetious writer in the *Quarterly* remarks that "Though Mr. Edgeworth—speaking of his friend *in contrast to himself*—represents him as *not* being of a very *amorous* turn, yet he appears to have done his best towards getting married; he proposed to Edgeworth's sister, to the lady who afterwards became Edgeworth's third wife, to her sister, afterwards Mr. Edgeworth's fourth wife; he adopted two little orphan girls, and trained them, upon the chance that one or other of them might be suitable; and finally he married Miss Milnes, of Yorkshire—his ideal mate."

Affairs relating to art are dealt with in a paper upon published letters from Benjamin Robert Haydon, and James Elmes, the architect, urging that a part of the grant of a million pounds for additional churches should be devoted to historical paintings as altar pictures, and that public halls should similarly be adorned. The reviewer is in general sympathy with the proposals. Admirers of works like those of Puvis de Chavannes at the Panthéon will probably agree that what was written in 1820 applies now.

LITERARY GOSSIP

I earnestly hope that Mr. Bertrand Russell's article in the *Nation* of July 17 on "Lenin, Trotsky and Gorky" will be read and taken to heart by those who philander either with the idea of Bolshevism as a panacea, or with the idea of suppressing it by force. In Mr. Russell's words, "I went to Russia believing myself a Communist; but contact with those who have no doubts has intensified a thousandfold my own doubts, not only of Communism, but of every creed so firmly held that for its sake men are willing to inflict widespread misery"—one hears the very accents of intellectual honesty.

* * *

That poignant and deeply impressive picture of Gorky with which Mr. Russell concludes will haunt my memory for days. THE ATHENÆUM has no politics; and precisely for this reason I would, if I could, rivet my readers' attention upon the intellectual tragedy of Russia. It is their duty as men who believe in civilization to keep it before their minds, to remember, in Gorky's words, what Russia has suffered, and to resolve that this suffering must at all costs be mitigated. Mr. Russell in conversation with me described four scarecrow Petrograd professors who came to see him. Their aspect was unbelievable; their clothes in tatters; only when they spoke could he realize that they were men of the highest intellectual distinction.

* * *

Yet they were all employed in teaching men of the working classes. That distinguished professors should be kept at such work is a tragedy itself. But that is nothing. Among them was Alexander Blok, the famous poet, who is engaged in teaching æsthetics. With his pupils themselves he was more than content. But the Government insisted that the doctrines he expounded must be orthodox and Marxian. Marxian æsthetics! It would be a sublime joke, but for the underlying horror. Let intellectuals remember that their brethren in Russia are suffering worse than they did under the Inquisition; let them also remember the simple truth about Gorky. "Gorky has done," says Mr. Russell, "all that one man could do to preserve the intellectual and artistic life of Russia. But he is dying, and perhaps it is dying too." Oh, the pity of it!

* * *

The revival of a critical interest in Dickens lends a particular attraction to the remarkable collection of books and MSS. by, or relating to, Dickens in Messrs. Sotheran's latest catalogue (5s. net). The Dr. Jupp collection contains the precious Memoranda book, containing his notes for books unwritten and written, which was given by Mrs. Comyns Carr to be sold for the Red Cross.

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This Memoranda book is fascinating; it illuminates Dickens's method of writing. On a page reproduced in the catalogue there are a couple of notes used in "Little Dorrit": "The unwieldy ship taken in tow by the snorting little steam-tug. [Done in *Casby and Panks*.]" The italics represent a later entry. And again: "Our house. Whatever it is, it is in a first-rate situation and a fashionable neighbourhood. (Auctioneers called it 'a gentlemanly residence.')" A series of little closets squeezed up into the corner of a dark street—but a Duke's mansion round the corner. The whole house is just large enough to hold a vile smell. The air breathed in it at the best of times—a kind of distillation of Mews. [Done in the *Barnacles*.]" The importance of the part played in the shaping of "Little Dorrit" by the vision of the first brief note will be recognized by any reader of the novel.

Then there is, for the more sentimentally inclined, a collection of letters by or to Mrs. Winter (*née* Miss Maria Sarah Beadnell), the original Dora of "David Copperfield," Dickens's engagement to whom was broken off in 1833. Unfortunately, there are none of Dickens's letters to her. The lovers never met or communicated again till 1855, when she wrote to Dickens, and he replied: "It is a matter of perfect certainty to me that I began to fight my way out of poverty and obscurity with one perpetual idea of you." This collection includes letters sent by her brother to Maria when she was in Paris in 1829, and they explain the reference in a passage of one of the 1855 letters to her: "when I was writing the word Paris just now, I remember that my existence was once entirely uprooted and my whole Being blighted by the Angel of my soul being sent there to finish her education." There is something enchanting in the romantic language of this tenacious affection.

* * *

The following is another entry in the catalogue: "HISTORY OF PICKWICK, in the shape of an A.L.S. to THE ATHENÆUM, and some printed matter. . . ." There may still survive some reader who recalls the controversy to which this refers. On March 19, 1866, THE ATHENÆUM printed a letter from R. Seymour, son of the first illustrator of the "Pickwick Papers," with regard to the publication of "Seymour's Sketches" by H. G. Bohn. The correspondent—apart from his condemnation of Bohn—asserted that "the idea and title of the work ['Pickwick'] was my father's, who had so far matured his plan as to show it to Mr. McLean, and afterwards to Mr. Spooner, who had some idea of publishing it, and proposed that Theodore Hook should write the letterpress."

* * *

Dickens immediately replied: "Mr. Seymour the artist never originated, suggested, or in any way had to do with, save as illustrator of what I devised, an incident, a character (except the sporting tastes of Mr. Winkle), a name, a phrase, or a word to be found in the 'Pickwick Papers.'" He mentions too "some incoherent assertions made by the widow of Mr. Seymour in the course of certain endeavours to raise money." This was in 1849.

* * *

But the question was not settled. The D.N.B.'s account of the genesis of "Pickwick" is this: "During the winter of 1835-6 the publishers Chapman & Hall employed Seymour to illustrate . . . 'The Squib Annual.' This led to Seymour suggesting to Chapman a series of 'Cockney Sporting Plates. . . .' Hall applied to Charles Dickens . . . to write the letterpress." The first part of "Pickwick" was warmly received, and Seymour "executed the plates for the second part; but before it was published he shot himself with a fowling-piece on 20 April 1836." Here, then, is the mystery. Had Seymour (already submitting to the polite dictatorship of C. D.) received his dismissal before that time? In this case the "incoherent assertions" of his widow become quite intelligible and the revival of the question unpleasant to C. D.'s later years. But no judgment can be made without fresh facts.

* * *

The news comes from America that the Canadian Export Paper Company has signed a contract with the *New York Times* for a yearly supply of 40,000 tons of paper for five years. Eighty million pounds of paper would probably be enough to supply the whole book trade of America for a year. It is true that American newspapers are larger as a rule than the English; but the same relation probably holds good of the larger newspapers in England, say the *Times* or the *Daily Telegraph*. A single one of them uses as much wood pulp as the whole book-publishing trade of the country. In other words, there is a real danger that the newspaper will kill the book.

Science BLEEDING

TO be a "blood donor" is one thing; to be a "bleeder" is quite another. The one has all the glamour of a voluntary sacrifice made on behalf of a fellow-creature; the other is the unfortunate legatee of an abnormal condition of the blood, by virtue of which any bleeding, once started, is very difficult to staunch and may continue until the victim dies of its effects. For more than a century the existence of bleeders has been recognized by doctors, and for more than a century speculation and research have attempted to find the cause and cure of the condition. Bleeders have been numerous enough for the term to become well known among the people, and it has even retained its original and accurate meaning of "one who bleeds"; nevertheless the condition is usually referred to in medical circles as "hæmophilia."

In a normal person as soon as a breach is made in the surface of the body bleeding occurs, but it soon ceases owing to the formation of a clot in the blood-vessels that have been injured. The blood of a bleeder, however, possesses this power of clotting in a very low degree; the divided blood-vessels therefore do not become blocked up, and bleeding continues almost indefinitely. The clotting of normal blood is a complicated chemical reaction depending on the simultaneous presence of a number of substances, but which reagent is deficient in the bleeder has not been determined. Ordinarily, blood outside the body will clot in two to three minutes; the blood of a bleeder may take fifteen to twenty minutes, or even longer, but it has been found that this coagulation-time undergoes variations from unknown causes at different periods, so that a bleeder may be at intervals almost not a bleeder; he may even, as he grows up, altogether cease to be a bleeder, but such cases are unfortunately rare. A bleeder is exposed not only to danger from accidental cuts or abrasions, for a slight bruise may result in a large effusion of blood under the skin, or the too vigorous use of a tooth-brush may cause a serious bleeding from the gums. Bleeding may also occur without any evident cause at all, in the form, for instance, of bleeding from the nose, or as a spontaneous effusion of blood into a joint, such as the knee, and this may happen repeatedly, so that the joint becomes permanently damaged.

Another salient fact about bleeders that is widely known to the public is that the condition is inherited; but the manner of its inheritance is peculiar. It is a disease found exclusively among males, but it is transmitted exclusively by females; that is to say, the bleeding factor is present in females, but remains latent in them, and appears only in their male children and in the male children of their daughters. Many cases of alleged female bleeders have been reported, but a critical examination of the evidence has always shown that the condition was one of the other diseases of which bleeding is a symptom, and not true "hæmophilia." No one can tell who were the first bleeders; but it is certain that they had sisters and that these sisters married and had daughters through whom the disease has become widely disseminated. The condition seems never to be transmitted in the male line, but there have been few cases in which this could be tested. Bleeders have seldom survived the dangers of childhood, for it is unusual to reach maturity without one or more mishaps which draw blood, or without a visit to an unwitting dentist or surgeon. If a bleeder happens also to be a Jew he has a very poor chance indeed, for a few days after birth he will probably succumb to the rite of circumcision. It is an inconsiderate provision of

Nature that a bleeder is very frequently endowed with a particularly boisterous temperament, so that his delicate constitution seldom gets the cotton-wool packing that it demands. It is another unfortunate fact that the mothers of bleeders are often very prolific and produce an unusually large proportion of boys.

The disease and its peculiar sex-limited manner of inheritance have been so long recognized that the great majority of bleeder families are known and their pedigrees have been recorded. The knowledge of the probable sorrows of bereavement to which they were exposing themselves does not seem, however, to have deterred the potential mothers of bleeders from marrying, and the number of bleeders has not diminished. It has not, therefore, become any the less necessary to discover, if possible, some method of curing the disease, or, in other words, of conferring upon the bleeder's blood the power of rapid coagulation which it lacks. Hitherto no boy or man known to be a bleeder has been able to risk even so small an operation as the extraction of a tooth, and much less any more serious surgical operation, however necessary, but gradually the bleeder's prospects of life are improving; the terrors of the perpetual imminence of death are being dispelled.

During the last few years it has been found that a transfusion into the bleeder of the blood of a normal person will not only restore to him the blood which he has lost, but will also confer temporarily upon his blood the power of coagulation, so that the bleeding can be stopped. Further, during the last few months a still simpler method of converting a bleeder into a normal person has been discovered. It has long been known that if a foreign protein substance, such as, for instance, is contained in the blood serum of a horse, is injected into the body, the system will acquire an increased sensitiveness to that protein, so that if the injection be repeated after a certain interval a very serious condition of shock and collapse, or even death, may result. This is known as "anaphylaxis," and was fairly often seen during the war in soldiers who had been wounded more than once and given on each occasion an injection of anti-tetanic serum. Now it is possible to regulate the degree of "anaphylactic shock" so produced by giving the protein in small doses, and it has been shown that the condition is accompanied by an increase in the coagulating power of the blood which lasts for several days. The principle has been applied to bleeders, who, by being subjected to a slight anaphylactic shock, can be rendered capable of undergoing necessary operations without fear of death by bleeding. The permanent cure has yet to be discovered, but there is at any rate now no reason why the bleeder should not have his life prolonged and at the same time be enabled to enjoy the benefits conferred by modern surgery.

K.

SOCIETIES

ROYAL.—June 24.—Sir J. J. Thomson, President, in the chair. The following papers were read: "On some Rostro-carinate Flint Implements and Allied Forms," by Sir Ray Lankester; "A Re-examination of the Light scattered by Gases in respect of Polarization: I. Experiments on the Common Gases," by Lord Rayleigh; "Note on the Influence of Temperature on the Rigidity of Metals," by A. Mallock; "A Study of Catalytic Actions at Solid Surfaces: V. The Rate of Change conditioned by a Nickel Catalyst and its Bearing on the Law of Mass Action," by E. F. Armstrong and Dr. T. P. Hilditch; "Tidal Friction in Shallow Seas," by Dr. H. Jeffreys; "Arc Spectra in Vacuo and Spark Spectra in Helium of Various Elements," by Professor J. C. McLennan, J. F. T. Young, and H. J. C. Ireton; "Spark Spectra of Various Elements in Helium in the Extreme Ultra-Violet," by Professor J. C. McLennan and A. C. Lewis; "Low-Voltage Ionization Phenomena in Mercury Vapour," by K. H. Kingdon; "Electrification of an Insulated Lens and Allied Problems treated by the Stream Function," by Sir George Greenhill; "Simultaneous Values of Magnetic Declination at Different British Stations," by

C. Chree; "Symmetrizable Functions and their Expansion in Terms of Biorthogonal Functions," by Dr. J. Mercer; "Reduction of Error by Linear Compounding," by W. F. Sheppard; "Plane Stress and Plane Strain in Bipolar Co-ordinates," by G. B. Jeffery; "The Tidal Motion in the Irish Sea, its Currents and its Energy," by R. O. Street; "The Catalytic Activity of Copper, Part I," by W. G. Palmer; "The Origin of the 'Cyanogen' Bands," by S. Barratt; "The Effects of Electron Collisions with Atmospheric Neon," by Dr. F. Horton and Ann C. Davies; "On the Occurrence of Diatoms on the Skin of Whales," by A. G. Bennett, with an Appendix by E. W. Nelson; "An Extension of the Balmer Series of Hydrogen and Spectroscopic Phenomena of Very Long Vacuum Tubes," by R. W. Wood; and "Moving Striations in Neon and Helium," by Dr. F. W. Aston and T. Kikuchi.

ARISTOTELIAN.—July 5.—Professor Wildon Carr in the chair.—Dr. W. F. Geikie-Cobb read a paper on "Mysticism, True and False."

The application of the term "mystic" to current psychic phenomena is unwarranted. True mysticism is the immediate apprehension of the One as the Good rather than the True; it possesses a positive, personal, unquestioning quality which is a necessary feature of all moral valuation, and belongs to the world of the "excessive," and therefore *per se* beyond logic. All attempts to communicate the mystic experience are limited to the use of symbols, and therefore, by their very nature, doomed to partial failure. Those symbols, however, are not selected arbitrarily by the conscious mind, but drawn from the storehouse of the unconscious. Mysticism differs from "extroversion" in that its supreme interest is in the One who is at once Another and the Ground of the mystic's being. The truth of mysticism is implied in the truth of the Self as transcendental, a truth without which the empirical Self loses most of its value. But mysticism is not adequately defined as a form of feeling, and what has led to its being so defined is the fact that not Thought, but Love, is the distinguishing function of all true mystic experience. If an air of unreality surrounds the utterances of mystics, it is only for those who are strangers to Love. He who loves eternal beauty holds its transitory appearances as of lesser worth. Dante, for example, at the height of his vision, saw Love enthroned, and declared that it was Love which moved the sun and the other stars. Before this supreme experience of Love it would seem that all discursive thought was foredoomed to silence as a worshipper in the outer court of Reality.

SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES.—June 24.—Sir Hercules Read, President, in the chair.—Lieut.-Col. W. Hawley presented a report on the excavations so far carried out at Stonehenge.

The archaeological excavations were to a great extent governed by the work of securing the stones undertaken by the Office of Works, as it was necessary to examine carefully all excavations carried out for the purpose of straightening the stones. The first stones dealt with were those numbered 6 and 7, and in the excavations made round these stones were found many Sarsen and other stone fragments, pieces of Bronze Age and Romano-British pottery, rough pieces of flint implements, fragments of bone and of charred wood, a few coins, one of Tetricus and another of George III., hammers-tones and packing-stones. The excavations were in every case taken right down to the chalk rock. The work has not progressed far enough for any deductions as to date to be made with certainty.

In the intervals of working on the standing stones, excavations were carried out just within the outer rampart. On a plan, preserved in the Bodleian Library, made by Aubrey in 1666, certain depressions are marked just within the earthwork. Those marked were located, and many others were found at regular intervals of 16 feet round the earthwork. Twenty-three of these holes were excavated, completing half the circle. The holes varied in size from 2ft. to 3ft. 5in. deep, and in diameter from 2ft. 5in. to 5ft. 3in. There could be little doubt that each of these holes originally held a small upright stone, and, with the exception of four, cremated human remains had been deposited in all of them. The holes contained much the same kind of relics as were found in the excavations round the standing stones, but in one was found a mass of flint flakes discarded by an implement maker who had been working on the spot. The continuation of the excavation will be watched with interest.

In the discussion that followed, Dr. Thomas, of the Geological Survey, gave it as his opinion that the igneous rocks had come from Pembrokehire and were brought by hand, and not ice-borne.

UNDER the auspices of the British Society of Franciscan Studies, M. Paul Sabatier will deliver an address on "The Consequences of the Franciscan Movement over Historical Criticism and over the General History of the Thirteenth Century," at University College, Gower Street, on Monday, July 26, at 5.30 p.m. The lecture is intended for members of the British Society of Franciscan Studies, but will also be open, without ticket, to all those interested in the subject.

Fine Arts THE PARIS SALON II.

TO be perfectly fair, I must own that by long search I did at last discover some little pencil portraits by Friant of scrupulous workmanship. The "Femme au Tigre" by the same artist contains passages which—though devoid of all style, of course—do not disappear into nothingness on analysis. Some anatomical studies in pencil by Luc Olivier Merson (in which the heads are too big, and vulgar) also withstand examination. Finally the total is completed with a portrait of a Chinese woman by Bonnat, which is simple, well constructed, and not without a kind of charm, due largely to the natural style of the model and a certain senile clumsiness in the execution. The remainder of the exhibition is entirely made up of the vilest productions which have ever disgraced a nation.

The sculpture restores one's confidence a little. In default of beauty and grandeur, it possesses at least some reality. There—the only profit from my unhappy expedition—I found the confirmation of a precious truth. The exhibits which are cut in stone or marble preserve some solidity. The most formless are those which are modelled—the result, that is to say, of easy labour in amorphous clay. This means that every time the worker meets with any resistance in his material he is obliged to arrive at the creation of a "form." Stone is thus a material which *commands*, clay a material which *obeys* every caprice. Hence, whenever the modeller yields to the temptation to display his manual dexterity we get softness and disorder. And as fools are only concerned with dexterity, they give us poorer and poorer works in proportion as the medium selected is easier to handle. It may thus be affirmed that beauty, which is a phenomenon of a purely technical order, increases in direct accordance with the *resistance* which the artist meets with in his search for a means of expression. If, moreover, the artist is pure and great, his conscience will oppose to the proposals of his sensations a resistance which will increase in proportion to the height of the plastic ideal which he has made his own; and the creation of a work of art thus meets with double resistance—from without and from within, from the material employed and from the mind. Beauty is the fruit of a slavery willingly accepted by the artist, and governed in the last resort by the exigencies of material. Much might be written on this subject, and I shall return to it. For the moment I must be content with having endeavoured to show that total liberty in the creative act kills art, and thus renders any spontaneous expression inoperative.

The painter, whose brush can easily cover the canvas in all directions, is still more free than the modeller. This is the sole explanation of the inferiority of the painting as compared with the sculpture at the Grand Palais. The strange taste for brushwork, for the cavalier approach, and a low level of intelligence have conspired together to destroy academic painting. If we modern painters needed any encouragement to draw closer to the primitives with whom we have so much affinity, we could find here an example of the pictorial decay to which the lure of the eighteenth century conducted. David's discipline, which still seems so cold to many, acts as a restraint upon the pride of the modern painter. David, with Cézanne, constitutes the first rung of the ideal ladder which will lead us, at the cost of a thousand sacrifices, towards the purity of the first ages. In vain do the partisans of Disorder (of both the Impressionist and Expressionist variety) attempt to paralyse and ridicule the efforts of

the young traditionalists by hailing David as the master of present-day academic painting. The official school is powerless to dower its pupils with even that elementary craftsmanship the last survivals of which I noted above in the work of three of the oldest Academicians, and it now crowns pictures executed in a distraught technique which is absolutely opposed to the classical principle. The expiring corpse of the Academy endeavours to acquire new blood by contact with Impressionism, which is also on its death-bed. How amazing is the spectacle of these two ghosts of erstwhile enemy schools struggling to consummate a monstrous union! The fruits of this senseless union revolt all those who can appreciate both David and Renoir, the two most formally opposed masters. For what we have here is not the scrupulous honesty of the painter of the Sabine women, but a kind of myopia which cannot disentangle itself from the object, incapable of estimating elements in their degrees of plastic importance; and it is no longer the rapid and pearly touch of Renoir which animates the canvas, but merely thick lumps of paint like commas, insignificant and vulgar in colour. The Academy now confers its honours on works which copy the model without style—that is to say without truth—and on the Impressionist touch robbed of its colour. And thus it passes dishonoured to its death.

There is no manifestation, however shameful, which does not contain its moral; and the moral to be drawn from a visit to the Grand Palais is full of encouragement for the young modern painter. For he has here the most tangible proof that the course which attracts him is logical and sound. Suppose for one moment the affirmation by indisputable works of a personality embodying that of our most venerated classical masters: imagine a painting from a contemporary brush which could move us by purely traditional means. Comparing the poverty of our poor new methods with the magnificence of the ancient procedure, we might well be dismayed and hesitate to persevere in a path illumined by no former experience. But the fact that there is no talent expressing itself now by the well-known methods proves that the old moulds are definitely worn out. Let us keep, then, from the past nothing but the unchanging laws which it illustrated in its fashion. Henceforward rhythm, balance and harmony demand a new language for their expression. The bankruptcy of all plastic language based on "imitation" seems to prove to us that direct literal expression must be succeeded by indirect, figurative, metaphorical expression, which, like a flower springing amid ruins, will slowly rise from the exaggerations, absurdities, hypotheses, conceits, inventions, caprices and dreams of nascent Cubism.

ANDRÉ LHOTE.

MR. WALTER SICKERT

THERE are a certain number of American colloquial expressions which have passed so assuredly into the English vernacular that it is affectation to exclude them from the printed page. One of these is the word "stunt," which is frequently used in conversation to connote an effective type of picture or manner of painting which can be readily analysed, and is therefore, in most cases, rather obvious and relatively easy to imitate. We feel the need of the word in writing about Mr. Sickert's art, because it is most easily described as an art entirely free from stunts of any kind. Pictures which are partially or entirely stunts can often arrest attention in an exhibition where a Sickert painting may at first be overlooked. This avoidance on the part of Mr. Sickert of all forms of effective bravura has, of course, in itself something of the divine confidence of genius. For many of the most splendid masters arouse our enthusiasm in the first place by some

brilliant stunt in actual painting or arrangement which is afterwards found to be the least permanently valuable part of the picture. Mr. Sickert's refusal to announce himself by any preliminary flourish of trumpets implies a conviction that he is strong enough to stand on his sterling qualities alone. He begins, that is to say, where Rembrandt himself left off, and challenges by the gesture the highest standards of criticism. His art, he tells us in effect, is either great art or it is nothing at all. And when we have listened for a time to the still, small voice sent up by his pictures we are generally inclined to grant the justice of his claim.

The exhibition of his work now arranged at the Chelsea Book Club affords a better opportunity of appreciating his art than Londoners have had for some years past. After a couple of hours spent in quiet contemplation of these pictures and drawings, which are lent by various collectors, and date from different periods in his career, we realize that we are behind the scenes of modern art, faced with the very stuff it is made of. Mr. Sickert's modernity is based on the conception of art as an organic part of life, not as the trade or pastime of combining elegancies or recording purely ocular impressions in paint; and it is expressed in a sober and logical workmanship acquired from long worship at the shrines of Balzac, Degas and Whistler.

It is, in fact, impossible to exaggerate the influence of these three great spirits on his art. It was Balzac—whom he may have reached through Zola—who reinforced his instinctive belief in the necessity for an absolutely unprejudiced approach to life, and who fertilized an intuition which was afterwards to reveal to him the grandeur that lies behind banality. It was Degas—whose portrait of him (in reproduction) hangs in this exhibition—who taught him to draw; to build up his drawings in successive superimposed and ever more expressive statements. And it was Whistler who taught him the system of the single focus and initiated him into the delights of pure painting. The admirable picture called "Ennui" (presented here in the form of an etching) is the quintessence of Balzac translated into paint; the drawings "Girl in Hat at the Piano" and "Nude seated on Bed" (pencil and pen in one case, pencil, pen and wash in the other), no less than the portrait of Mrs. Saxton Noble and Mr. Shearman's "Girl in the Pink Vest," derive direct technical inspiration from Degas' pastels; and the delicate colour-variations in Lady Hamilton's large "St. Mark's" come straight from Whistler's subtle low-toned palette.

Upon the foundation of these influences Mr. Sickert has constructed a coherent, sufficient and personal art which constitutes an important link between French painting of the final quarter of the nineteenth century and English painting of the last twenty years, a link of the same kind as that constituted by Degas himself between the art which immediately preceded him and the art which conquered in his later years. Degas started in the Academic tradition, and developed into a force inspiring Impressionism, and reminding it at the same time of the necessity of discipline. Mr. Sickert started as an Impressionist, and he has developed into a potent influence on English Post-Impressionism, an influence which (except in the case of one or two lady plagiarists) has acted at once as a valuable stimulant and a valuable restraint, as we have seen again and again in the excellent pictures produced by members of the Camden Town and London Groups.

In this way he holds a unique position among contemporary English artists, and he owes it to the conviction shared by all serious students that he is essentially an artist, essentially a painter, and possessed of the moral qualities which alone can enable an artist to give complete

and permanent form to his realizations. He is accorded eminence because he can paint a scene in a public bar and give us nothing in the picture except art, and because he can paint a Glasgow School portrait and make it not only an exquisite arrangement in brown and violet and yellow grey, but also an emotional and intensely realized statement of life, like Mr. Taylor's portrait in this exhibition.

Mr. C. J. Holmes, who is often so helpful as a pragmatic critic, has laid it down as an axiom that all great artists continue their experiments in middle age, and it is interesting to observe that Mr. Sickert responds to this test as he responds to so many others. He has always been in his quiet way a wonderful painter, but he has restricted his colour to a gamut of greys and eliminated almost entirely the influence of the local colour of his subject. In his latest work we find a perceptible effort towards a command of a larger range of colour. Mr. Shearman's picture, which stands between his early and his latest work, is remarkable for the variation produced by a small number of tints. As in the early pictures, the play of local colour is reduced to a minimum. The girl's hair, the shadows on her chest, the brass handles on the bed, and the shadows on the distant portion of the white sheets (which appear quite different and relatively convincing) are all in point of fact painted with the same colour. In Mrs. Jowett's "Brighton" (which we take to be a recent work) there is a move towards the exploitation of local colour as part of the scheme of the picture; it is seen, for example, in the retention of the red of the singers' suits in both light and shadow. We find the same thing in the blue lamp-post and the servant-girl's pink dress in Mrs. Jowett's "Bath," and it appears again in the green trees of Mr. Taylor's landscape, which hangs on the same wall. For our own part we do not feel that Mr. Sickert's art gains anything by this particular experiment; but we welcome it, nevertheless, as evidence that the artist who has already given us so much, and who has stood for so much to us for so long, is not yet at the end of his resources.

R. H. W.

THE TAUNTON HEIRLOOMS

MESSRS. SOTHEY, WILKINSON & HODGE sold on July 13-16 Lord Taunton heirlooms from Quantock Lodge, Bridgwater. The pictures are very diverse in character and quality, and include a Tuscan-Byzantine Triptych and an early Sienese Madonna and Child with Saints, the latter characteristic in general colour, but without the gentle green tints in the flesh which are found in the prettiest early quattrocento pictures of Siena and Florence. Later Italian art is represented by works ascribed to Bernardino Luini, Fra Bartolommeo and Ludovico Carracci, and by an important painting, "The Death of St. Peter Martyr," which figured in the catalogue as by Titian and contains a passage of fine Giorgionesque painting round about the waist of the man in armour. The French pictures are mainly school pieces, but the Dutch and Flemish include a portrait of an elderly woman by Jan Van Schoorel, a cockfight by Snyders, a good Wouverman, a first-rate Brauer and a delightful little portrait of a boy catalogued as School of G. Netscher, but unquestionably the work of an excellent artist. Interesting, too, are the full-length portraits of Charles I. as a young man by Daniel Mytens, and of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, when a girl, by Paul Van Somer, both stated to have been in Charles I.'s collection, and the painting attributed to H. Danckers which was formerly in the collection of Horace Walpole, and bears the following inscription in his handwriting on the frame: "Mr. Rose the royal Gardener presenting to King Charles 2^d the first pineapple raised in England. This picture belonged to Mr. London the Nursery man [Partner of Mr. Wise] whose Heir bequeathed it to the Revd. Mr. Pennicall of Ditton who gave it to Mr. Walpole 1780. Hor. Walpole." One wonders what little service Walpole rendered to Mr. Pennicall in exchange.

Music

A LEGEND OF ROSSINI

THERE are certain composers about whom it would not be very far from the truth to say that they survive only by compositions which they did not write and personal anecdotes which are not true. Historical researchers laboriously disprove these romantic stories, but they receive no thanks for it. Their demonstrations are indeed seldom read, even by those whose duty it is to keep up with research. The old legends are copied from one book into another until they become almost articles of faith. Yet one by one scholars have exploded the pretty tales of Palestrina and the cardinals, of Astorga and his father's execution, of Pergolesi and his love affairs, of Stradella and the assassins. To expose the falsity of the spurious compositions has been a little more difficult. From a scientific point of view the *onus probandi* lies on those who maintain the works to be genuine. But the public is always quite willing to accept their word for it, and they have strong commercial interests to back them. Mr. Barclay Squire demonstrated several years ago that the familiar song "Tre giorni son che Nina," ascribed to Pergolesi, was never ascribed to that composer before the first half of the nineteenth century; that it came from a comic opera performed in London some time after Pergolesi's death, and that it was quite clearly and definitely a comic song. He reprinted the earliest known copy, printed in London, with its humorous second verse, and cited Dr. Arne's wife as a witness that it was composed by one Vincenzo Ciampi. Mr. Squire's researches are not buried in a learned periodical. The song has an article all to itself in Grove's Dictionary, and Mr. Fuller Maitland reprinted it in full in "The Oxford History of Music." But neither singers nor teachers of singing ever seem to read these things, and one can hear the song at almost any vocal recital sung in the intense and tragic manner for which Mme. Viardot set the fashion half a century ago.

It is from Paris of the romantic days that most of these forgeries come. In the days of Fétis people were just beginning to be interested in old music, but not interested enough to have applied to it the methods of scientific historical research. It was from many causes an age which preferred faith to reason. The most absurd case of all was the well-known jest of Berlioz, who composed a little chorus more or less in the manner of Gluck, passed it off as a motet by one Pierre Ducré, a purely imaginary composer of the sixteenth century, and deceived the learned Fétis himself into believing that it was genuine.

These Parisian musical romancers did not even spare the living. Rossini in 1862 told a friend that all the biographies of him without exception were full of absurdities and more or less nauseating fictions. One of the most notorious of these has just been exposed in the current number of the *Rivista Musicale Italiana* by Professor Giuseppe Radiciotti. It relates to the first performance of Rossini's youthful comic opera known variously as "Il Signor Bruschino," "I due Bruschini" or "Il figlio per azzardo." The story as generally told is that in 1813 Rossini was summoned to Venice by Cera, the manager of the Teatro S. Moisè. He seized the opportunity of negotiating also with the Fenice. Cera discovered this and was naturally furious. In order to ruin the comic opera which Rossini was to write for S. Moisè, and to ruin the composer's reputation as well, he provided him with a libretto so bad that it was impossible to set it to music. Rossini saw the trap, and accepted the libretto, with the intention of outdoing in his music the absurdity of the words. His French biographer Azevedo describes the first performance. In the course of the overture the second

violins beat the time with their bows on the metal lampshades of their desks. When the opera began it was found that the composer had set comic scenes to serious music and *vice versa*; that the basses were made to sing nothing but high notes, the sopranos nothing but low ones. The greater part of this one-act comic opera was taken up by a long funeral march. In an *ensemble* the phrase "Padre mio, son pentito," was repeated by the voices in an ingenious way that produced the effect of a perpetual "tito-tito-tito." There was a scene of complete disorder in the theatre, during which Rossini continued to direct the opera without showing the least sign of amusement.

Professor Radiciotti, instead of contenting himself with this entertaining story, has consulted the newspapers of the time, the original printed libretto, and the original score of the music. The Venetian papers tell us that "Il Signor Bruschino" was to be performed towards the end of January, 1813, but they give no account of the performance. We may conclude from this that the opera was a failure; but it is hardly proof of the truth of Azevedo's story. As a matter of common sense, asks Prof. Radiciotti, would any manager attempt to bring deliberate ruin on one of his own productions merely for the sake of revenge? And in any case is it credible that the manager in question would never have attended a single rehearsal or have at least kept himself informed about the progress of the rehearsals?

The plot of the opera is a perfectly conventional one; it runs on much the same lines as "Le Astuzie Femminili." Most of the Italian comic operas of the eighteenth century turn on a young lady who outwits her guardian and marries the man of her own choice. As to the music, two only of Azevedo's statements are true, and they are true in a very modified sense. During the overture there does occur the direction that the second violins are to hit their lampshades with their bows; but it is merely a succession of six strokes which recurs two or three times by itself as a sort of introduction to the entry of the second subject of the overture. The funeral march is not more than sixteen bars long, and it comes in very appropriately as a comic introduction to the finale in which Bruschino junior presents himself repentant before his infuriated father. And he does so with the words "Padre mio, mio, mio, son pentito, tito, tito." The humour of such a scene is perfectly obvious without any musical illustration. The rest of the famous story is pure invention.

The opera was revived at Milan in 1844 and in a private theatre in Florence in 1869. It was also translated into French and remodelled by Offenbach for performance at the Bouffes Parisiens in 1857. Rossini was living in Paris at the time, but refused to go and hear it. "You may do what you please," he said, "but I refuse to be your accomplice."

There is a certain appropriateness in the publication of this little piece of research at the present moment. The Russian Ballet has made Rossini fashionable, and has even aroused an interest in the minor Italian comic operas of the period which preceded him. The grotesque is just now the chief object of musical endeavour. In view of the fact that Azevedo's romance is one of the most familiar of all the anecdotes about Rossini, it would not be in the least surprising to see "Il Signor Bruschino" revived as a Russian Ballet. But it can well be imagined that in such a case the most outrageously daring effect of all would be that the violinists should occasionally use their bows on the strings of their violins.

EDWARD J. DENT.

At the Glastonbury Festival this summer there will be daily performances from August 15 to September 11. There will be six cycles, each including Rutland Boughton's "Birth of Arthur" (first production) and "The Round Table," Purcell's "Dido and Æneas" and "The Immortal Hour."

"LE CHANT DU ROSSIGNOL"

IN its original form as an opera, Stravinsky's "Nightingale" was not wholly a *chinoiserie*. The *chinoiserie* was no more than an interlude between two episodes of real feeling, the scene with the fisherman and the scene of the death-bed. When it was announced that the opera was being turned into a ballet, there seemed every probability that the second act would gain by the transformation. The second act was conceived much more in the spirit of ballet than of opera. The ballet as given at Covent Garden on July 16 makes use of some of the music from the first act, but represents on the stage only the events of the second and third. The third act has one startlingly impressive moment in its new form; but the value of the scene between the Nightingale and Death is lost. The ballet, in fact, is *chinoiserie* and practically nothing else.

It is interesting to observe the development of M. Massine's ideas. In the ballets with which we are already familiar there were two effects which invariably roused the spectators to a frenzy of delight. One was in "La Boutique Fantastique" when Mme. Lopokova was carried round the stage on the shoulders of the *corps de ballet*; the other was in "Children's Tales" when Mme. Tchernitcheva was invested with her blue-and-white robe and turned her back to the audience to display it standing out like an enormous hoop-petticoat supported on the shoulders of her stooping attendants. These two moments have been seized and developed with conspicuous success in "Le Chant du Rossignol." A group of Chinese warriors in green, black and white are perpetually entangling themselves like the Cossack soldiers of "La Boutique Fantastique," into complicated arrangements of arms and legs, until it is impossible to tell which limbs belong to which bodies. The other effect brings off the climax of the whole play. The Emperor is seen on his death-bed, standing up against a white background, wrapped right up to his chin in what looks like a sleeping-bag. After the Nightingale has driven Death away and the courtiers have entered to pay the last rites, the Emperor suddenly throws off the sleeping-bag, which unfolds and falls down in front of him. What looked like a sleeping-bag was the reverse side of a gorgeous scarlet-and-gold robe long enough to clothe the Emperor's figure and to reach several yards down the steps which lead up to his throne. At the same moment the white screen behind him sinks back so as to rest sloping against the back-cloth instead of vertical. Those who are familiar with the modern system of perspective will see that this is intended to produce the impression that the Emperor has himself risen to the vertical from the horizontal. The imposing effect of the long robe by itself is, of course, nothing very new. It was used with brilliant success in Florent Schmitt's "Tragédie de Salomé," besides being a favourite device of painters and sculptors when representing Queen Victoria. What makes its brilliant success in "Le Chant du Rossignol" is the sudden unfolding of it.

To a spectator who sees the ballet without any previous knowledge of the work the entertainment must be puzzling in the extreme. The opera had already lost most of the spirit of Hans Andersen's original story. In the ballet it is hardly possible to put the story together at all. But M. Massine is probably quite right in assuming that modern audiences are more likely to be familiar with Stravinsky's operas than with the tales of Hans Andersen. In any case "Le Chant du Rossignol" is the most extraordinary and acrobatic spectacle which the Russian Ballet has yet given us.

EDWARD J. DENT.

CONCERTS

It may be regarded as a sign of the success of the Glastonbury Players' visit to the "Old Vic" that some of their dances were repeated on June 29 at the Oriana Madrigal Society's concert in the Æolian Hall. The dance to a Ground of Purcell is amusing and ingenious, but seems entirely inappropriate to Purcell's music. Mr. Boughton's additions to Purcell were on this occasion a little curtailed. "The Moon Maiden," on the other hand, is a thing of real beauty, and it seemed to be much more effective in the Æolian Hall than either at the "Old Vic" or at Glastonbury. For one thing, it was very much better sung. Mr. Kennedy Scott quickened its tempo and altogether made it much more definite. This did not in any way destroy the poetry of it, but got rid of a good deal of its vague querulousness. Another innovation in the Society's programme was a group of French *chansons* which were extremely well sung; the English madrigals and songs were hardly as neat as usual. The Oriana has hitherto set the highest standard of madrigal singing; but it has now been surpassed by Mr. Steuart Wilson's sextet of solo singers. Naturally a chorus cannot achieve the delicacy and intimacy of single voices; but the Oriana must renew their efforts in this direction. Of the modern items the best was Gustav Holst's "Bring us in good ale." Modern settings of folk-songs seldom fail to be tedious owing to the repetitions of refrains and the long string of verses which elaboration only emphasizes. Dr. Walford Davies' part-song "Magdalen at Michael's Gate," though not actually a folk-song, was a case in point. Its sentimentality is far too long drawn out. Mr. Holst sees the temptation and sets himself deliberately to conquer it. Very cleverly he runs one verse into another, and thus produces a cumulative effect of climax at the end which is extremely powerful. It is one more proof of the classical principle that the skilful handling of formal problems is the most forcible means of real poetic expression.

UNDER the patronage of Mme. Melba, an Australian contralto, Miss Dorothy Murdoch, made her appearance at Steinway Hall on July 6. Miss Murdoch undoubtedly possesses a fine voice and has been well trained in the production of it, but she did not succeed in making her songs sound particularly interesting. It is not enough in these days just to do the ordinary things well in the ordinary way.

AN American pianist, Mr. George Copeland, who gave a recital on July 9, played on a pianoforte by the firm of Chickering. It is an honoured name in the history of the pianoforte, but one seldom seen in English concert-rooms. It is interesting to find new experiments being tried in pianofortes after the monotony inflicted upon us by the conditions of war. M. Cortôt played on a Pleyel, Signor Busoni on an Erard. Mr. Copeland's Chickering has points of resemblance with the old-fashioned Broadwood; it was an instrument of refined rather than powerful tone. Unfortunately, its bass was of very indifferent quality. It was in other respects very well suited to Mr. Copeland's brilliant style of technique. He has a clear and sparkling touch, and chose for the most part pieces that demanded dexterity rather than intellect, but his playing of Debussy and Albeniz had very considerable charm.

MR. RÖSING was obviously suffering from a severe sore throat at the concert which he gave with Mlle. Renée Chemet on July 14, and his methods of singing, one would imagine, are not such as to deal kindly with his vocal organs. He has now become almost as singular in his demeanour as M. Pachmann—with this difference, that M. Pachmann confines his oddities to those moments in which he is not actually playing. During the greater part of Mr. Rösing's performance one could feel little but pity for the torture to which his throat must have been put. In the Serenade of Moussorgsky, which depends for its effect on a smooth and sustained style, he did succeed in producing that sense of poetry which is peculiarly his own. An air from Bizet's "Pêcheurs de Perles" was also sung with great charm.

Mlle. Chemet is a violinist of great brilliance. She has a peculiar forcefulness of attack which is sometimes overdone, but in *virtuoso* pieces by Sarasate and others she roused her audience to remarkable enthusiasm, not so much by her facility of technique as by the vitality and elasticity of her interpretations.

Drama

SOME THOUGHTS ON ACTING

AMONG the performances that have so far resisted the theatrical "slump" is Mr. Louis Calvert's in the name-part of "Daddalums." Mr. Calvert's success in a distinctly old-fashioned rôle, which he interprets in a slightly old-fashioned way, is remarkable enough to lend a topical interest to the views on the art of acting expressed in his book "The Problems of the Actor" (Simpkin, 7s. net). He is well qualified to have views on the subject owing to his wide and long experience. As the son of that celebrated actress of the old school, Mrs. Charles Calvert, he enjoyed every opportunity of learning the traditions and the tricks of romantic acting; while as Broadbent in "John Bull's Other Island" and other Shavian characters he has shown his capacity for meeting the needs of the modern producer. He speaks with authority, therefore, when he compares the new school of players with the old.

The late Herbert Tree in one of his smart volumes of essays sported the paradox that there was really no technique in the art of acting. You had to imagine and feel the part, and play it as your feeling dictated, without preparation before the looking-glass. It is hard to believe that he really meant what he said, for no decent performance can be improvised. It must be planned as carefully as a picture or novel, and the mechanics of speech and movement must be acquired. As Mr. Calvert puts it, "The beginner is often told by the director not to strain and shout, but to 'speak naturally'; and then when he does speak naturally he is told that he cannot be heard." So he has to learn to speak, as he has to learn to walk and move his hands and (hardest of all) to stand still, and Mr. Calvert's complaint of the younger generation is, on the whole, that they are too proud to learn their technique.

We do not think that on this point he is quite fair to the present-day stage. Of course there are heaps of vile and careless actors to-day; but weren't there heaps of vile and careless actors in the palmy days also? Does not the merriment of Dickens's theatrical types conceal (to use a delightful Calvertian expression) a deep "artistic resentment"? Charles Kean's nasal suffocation was a popular joke; and we have read somewhere that both Edmund Kean and Macready were perpetually hoarse from faulty voice production. Whether this was so or not, when Mr. Calvert contrasts the careful elocution of the giants of the Romantic era with the ineffective and slipshod enunciation and intonation of so many present-day actors, he scarcely makes enough allowance for the fact that the problem the modern school are trying to solve is not the one that confronted their predecessors. The Romantic "platform stage" (it must be recalled again) was not a place of realistic illusion. The old-fashioned tragedian could be as artificial as an opera singer, provided he were as pleasing. In fact, with his elaborately modulated delivery and his set gestures (on which Mr. Calvert writes most interestingly) he was a species of opera singer. That is all right for Coriolanus. But if you are trying to represent a stockbroker receiving by simultaneous telephone calls the news of his bankruptcy and his wife's desertion you cannot, consistently with the furniture that surrounds you, express your emotions in melody. To carry across the footlights the feelings of a twentieth-century citizen, trained from childhood in the restraint of his voice and his movements, is not a particularly easy thing to do. And it is not surprising that few achieve it successfully.

Mr. Calvert is, nevertheless, extremely instructive in his discussion of the old actors.

They regarded it more as a virtue than a fault to speak ponderously and precisely. They sincerely thought, too, that upon their shoulders rested the burden of upholding the dignity and beauty of the English language; this was not a pose with them, they took it quite seriously and laboured most conscientiously at their task.

He goes on to speak of the uncanny vocal effects they managed to achieve:

I have heard an actor in the part of the ghost in "Hamlet" give the lines—

I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood. . .
in such a way that the word "freeze" did freeze my young blood and send chills down my youthful spine every time I listened to him.

Mr. Calvert mentions that sturdy veteran Osmond Tearle. It was (we think) of Edmund Tearle that we have been told by an actor who played with him that it was positively terrifying to be on the stage alone face to face with his Richard Crookback. From the same source we heard of another tragedian of this school breaking the eardrum of an unfortunate colleague, but this (though narrated in good faith) was perhaps only a variant of the legendary speech of the Othello who, playing in Hoxton, congratulated himself that in Act I. he was audible in Shoreditch, but in Act IV. "By G—, laddie, they could hear me in Islington High Street." The ranters, however, were but the corrupt following of the great elocutionists, and if we wish to see, or rather to hear, the style of the latter reproduced with a perfection and delicacy that was not (we dare swear) surpassed by Phelps or Kemble, we have only to catch Mr. Martin Harvey on one of those nights when he condescends to revivify the poor old "Corsican Brothers." After the scene of Fabian's vengeance on the Parisian duellist for his murdered brother we shall understand what the novelists of the 'thirties meant by a "sepulchral voice," and realize that it was nothing at all to laugh at.

But, leaving the strife of ancient and modern in the matter of technique, what else is it besides technique that makes the actor? Mr. Calvert thinks that one essential is "humanity," or, "consideration and sympathy for men and women." Good actors are "the kind of people who like their fellow-beings." A cynical and cruel nature in the long run destroys an actor's act. This strikes us as extravagant. No doubt an actor of such poverty of character that he cannot enter into the gentler and nobler emotions is sure to fail in sympathetic parts, but it is not really necessary that his personal character should be predominantly sympathetic and generous. If it were so, it would follow that a *penchant* for villainy was necessary for playing bad characters. Mr. Calvert is nearer the mark when he indicates sensitiveness to emotion as the real desideratum. What is really required is, as he says, the power of expressing "the primary emotions of grief, anger, fear, despair, humour, love, desire, hope." It will be found that emotion rather than imagination or intelligence is the mainspring of the actor's art.

We have already quoted an unacceptable paradox of Herbert Tree's. He came nearer the truth when he wrote that it was unimportant for an actor to be well-educated; that too much education was indeed a drawback. It is not, in fact, the rule that the best-read and most intellectual players are always the most successful in their art. We dare not give modern instances, even under the cloak of Mr. Calvert's discreet formula "I knew a young actor" or "I could name a celebrated manager," but we invite anyone who is interested to read a biography of Edmund Kean (and read it between the lines) if he wishes to know what degree of culture suffices for the

highest triumphs of this curious art. We have seen mythological characters portrayed with a delicacy that seemed to require an intimate love of classical literature by dancers for whom literature of any kind was a word without meaning, and historical personages played with the most subtle sense of period and background by actors who did not care (even if they knew) in what century and country the scene was laid. Laurence Irving was an accomplished scholar, and, beneath the weight of it, he had all the difficulty in the world not to sink into a failure. Herbert Tree had a fine and rich imagination, but his lack of emotion, as Mr. Calvert shows, repeatedly destroyed the fruit of his labours. The greater gifts are the least valuable in this pursuit. We cannot explain the paradox, but we will give proof of it from the pages of this very book.

Mr. Calvert is a type of the actor of culture. He studies the theory of his art; he follows up its history; the sight, in a New York theatre, of "a yellowish old lithograph on which are the portraits . . . of a score or more of the famous actors of the past" stirs his imagination as it might a poet's or an essayist's. Yet this is how he "feels himself into" Shylock:

I should forget his mediæval costume, his Elizabethan speech, forget even his name. I should give this second self of mine a new name; I should call myself "Stingy" Smith, the tightest man in town.

And on those lines, no doubt, better Shylocks than Irving's can be played. But the paradox remains remarkable.

D. L. M.

MR. CHEVALIER NOT AT HOME

LYCEUM.—"MY OLD DUTCH." By Arthur Shirley and Albert Chevalier.

WE have the greatest respect for the art of Mr. Albert Chevalier and the greatest respect for the ancient art of melodrama. But we do not (it will be understood) put them on a plane. "You should not have put butter in the works," said the Hatter to the March Hare in reference to his watch, and the reply that it was the best butter did not content him. They have not put Mr. Chevalier into anything like the best melodrama, and, if they had, it would have given him no chance to show himself at his best. For his art is an affair of *nuances*, of indescribable subtleties of expression and tone. A dozen music-hall comedians are funnier costers, and a dozen drama-actors can play a "heavy" scene at once more powerfully and less ponderously than he does. But only he has the secret of those minute touches that make his old actor, his curate, his Chelsea pensioner, and his costermongers so entirely authentic, so completely credible. Therefore let us have him in a small concert-hall, where we can watch him closely, or in the very best comedy that can be written, where he will have the setting and opportunities that are his due. Such crude stuff as "My Old Dutch" only encourages him to turn his one or two individualities into mannerisms, because everything must rest on a few simple strokes and there is no scope for quite two-thirds of his resources.

If Mr. Chevalier ever does appear again in a play worthy of him we hope he will take Miss Alice Bowes with him. Her performance of Sal Gratton, marking the stages by which the pert "donah" of the 'seventies is transformed into the broken-hearted but serene "Old Dutch" of the twentieth-century workhouse, is a piece of acting fit to rank with Mr. Chevalier's own. Really, with artists like these at their disposal Messrs. Melville ought not to act like the Demon Kings in their own pantomimes, and chain them down to pieces like this. Why not give them a fair chance in a reasonable play?

Correspondence

DISRAELI AS A NOVELIST

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—While reading with interest your excellent review of G. E. Buckle's "Life of Benjamin Disraeli," I am surprised to meet at the end of it with the following statement: "The place of Disraeli in literature appears fairly well defined. He is a good third-rate novelist—that is, his light does not begin to show until, say, George Meredith and Arnold Bennett have successively disappeared below the horizon." Without wishing to enter into discussion of these two authors' merits, I venture to think that the setting down of Disraeli as "a third-class novelist" is open to some discussion. I even doubt whether our age, which is none too firm on its legs, can fairly well set down or "define" the merits of any author, let alone those of Disraeli. Two of his merits, wit and satire, are, for instance, those which only an aristocratic age can appreciate—an age which is not, like ours, democratic, and consequently overflowing with that "Pöbelernst" (plebeian seriousness) which Nietzsche rightly castigates in one of his works. It is very often said in England that Disraeli was an Oriental, and cannot therefore be understood by the English people: it is very often forgotten that this Oriental not only belonged to a different race, but likewise to a different class, and that this difference of class, and not that of race, is the greatest obstacle to a just appreciation.

In connection with this it might interest you to hear that even in Germany, where Disraeli's name has been shamefully neglected hitherto, the great statesman is coming into his own. And not only the statesman, whom Bismarck once so eloquently summed up as "Der alte Jude, das ist der Mann," but likewise the author, of whom Bismarck thought nothing, and whose novels he dubbed "fantastic," without apparently having ever read them. One of Disraeli's best novels is no doubt "Tancred," which is as true—nay, even truer to-day than when it was written in 1847. It is the story of a bewildered and noble youth who, upon noticing that all beliefs and principles of his surroundings are equally untenable, wishes to gain some ground for conduct and conscience, and undertakes, for his own enlightenment and to the general amusement of the others, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Disraeli foresaw in 1847 the downfall, or, as he called it, "the shipwreck," of our civilization—and that on account of its general lack of ideas and principles!

Some years before the war I translated this book into German. It was ready for publication when the war broke out, but the publisher held it back, because, as he informed me, "no translation of an English author would be well received at the present moment in Germany." This was in 1914. The book was, nevertheless, published in 1918, and has met with such a success that the publisher (Georg Müller, Munich) has just asked me whether I could not provide him with other translations of Disraeli's novels.

The novels of which Victorian author, it might be asked, could be published successfully, and at the present moment, in one of the suffering countries of Central or Eastern Europe? Surely it is somewhat premature to fix Disraeli "definitely" down as "a third-class novelist."

I am, Sir, yours very truly,

OSCAR LEVY,

Editor of the authorized English translation
of Nietzsche's works.

Royal Societies Club, St. James's Street, S.W.

July 18, 1920.

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—I know that I am not alone in considering that "Lothair" is much more than "a collection of cleverly sketched scenes and characters . . . drawn with a good humour, grace and finish which induce us to overlook faulty workmanship." But I speak for myself when I say that, having read some half-dozen novels by modern writers of good standing, all concerned with the lives of young men in intimate detail, *ad nauseam*; after an interval of twenty years I re-read "Lothair" with surprise and intense appreciation. It is one of the finest studies of a young man

ever written—to take this point alone. If F. W. S. has never seen a young man at a picnic "quite fascinated" by a charming woman playfully thrusting a paper of lobster sandwiches into his hand, he has missed many things which one of the finest brains England is ever likely to produce considered worth understanding and sympathy.

To bracket Meredith and Arnold Bennett is perhaps questionable—one would like to hear Meredith on the subject. But how one would enjoy hearing from that master-craftsman of gentle ironies a comment on his dismissal from literature—his placing as an "also ran"—by your reviewer!

Truly yours,

W. M. LODGE.

July 17, 1920.

ENGLISH CLASSICS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM: FRENCH BIBLIOPHILY

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—It would seem ungracious to make any criticism on the wonderful exhibition of prints and drawings which has just been opened to the public at the British Museum. The width of taste and feeling which characterizes this exhibition is beyond praise, and even to express one's appreciation may savour of patronizing insolence. But the very fact of its excellence leads one to lament the unfortunate shape of the cases in which so many of the Oriental pictures are hung. The Chinese pictures hung at the back of these very deep cases are sometimes almost invisible owing to the agonizing quality of the reflections. One has only to contrast the pleasure gained from looking at those on the walls with the diluted satisfaction obtained from those in the cases, to realize how unfortunate these cases are. Much, however, could be done at little cost and not very much labour by pushing the pictures forward against the glass. I presume it would be necessary to put some construction inside, to which the pictures would be attached; but surely this trouble would more than find its compensation in a greatly enhanced appreciation of this great national collection, which we owe to the enthusiastic connoisseurship of Mr. Binyon.

To turn to a different matter—while agreeing with nearly everything "Autolycus" said last week about bibliophile snobbery, the fault is not so much with the publishers as with the French Government. The price of paper is now so great, and the paper itself so hard to obtain ("le Malthusienisme économique," to use the happy phrase of M. Gustave Téry), that the smaller and better publishers can only sell at a profit in putting up these snob editions and making a handsome sum out of each copy sold. This system particularly operates when the book is in any case likely to make a limited appeal, and sometimes it becomes really tragic. For instance, M. Valéry's new edition of poems, obviously an extremely important publication, will cost 120 francs, which M. Valéry affirms is the only way he can make any living out of his books. As long as the French Government is in the hands of M. Dupuis and the paper trust, this most unhappy state of things can only continue and grow worse, till eventually French literature will stop altogether. But the question who can afford to buy these books remains a mystery.

Yours faithfully,

19, Taverton Street, W.C.1.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

EMPIRE-BUILDING

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—It is not often given to the writer of a critical half a page in a non-political weekly to create an Empire. But this surely is what your gifted leader-writer achieved in the last issue of your valuable paper. Any additional information which you could induce him to give as to the manners, life and social customs of a Third French Empire would be of great value to historians. It is curious that it should be given to THE ATHENÆUM to be again first in the field with this interesting piece of history.

Your obedient servant,

OSBERT SITWELL.

Burlington Fine Arts Club,
17, Savile Row, W.1,
July 17, 1920

CHOPIN

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

DEAR SIR,—As a musical amateur young enough to remember his favourite composers in the order in which he met them, may I make a few remarks suggested by Mr. Dent's article on Chopin in your issue of the 9th inst.?

Chopin practically ousted every other composer from my interests for fully two years, my acquaintance with his music coming after that with Mendelssohn's. I was so deeply interested that during that period I could place any quotation of a few bars from any of his piano works in its context. I went frequently to recitals by first-class artists such as Pachmann, d'Albert, Bauer, and many more. I was never tired of studying him and praising him until I became interested in Schumann. Here again I followed the same practice, securing all his pianoforte works. I felt that he was freer—less "frilly and tinselled," as a friend put it—less exotic, broader, more solid, more masculine, and not a bit less of an artist.

Later, Schubert, Brahms, some modern composers, and, last of all, Bach, have taken my attention, with the result that, except for times when I do not want to think, Chopin is hardly ever opened. One or two of my friends, a good deal older than myself, have had similar experiences. We do not get much time for music, and are "keen." Compared with these other men, Chopin just does not seem worth while. At the present moment he is not nearly so interesting as Glazounov.

An exclusive musical diet of Chopin leaves one a bundle of nerves. His popularity is due, with the masses, to his sentiment, his display, and also to the fact that most people, even if they do not listen closely, or do not think at all, can hear some tune in him. I do not suggest that they get below the surface of his music, but he seems to be the composer for lazy listeners.

Mr. Dent's article was on Busoni in the first place and Chopin in the second, so that you might consider my letter out of order; but he made one or two remarks in praise of Chopin with which I could not agree. My judgment of this musician is probably biased by temperament, but as my ideas coincide more or less with those of several friends, and as I have never seen the point of Chopin's narrowness and smallness raised in any journal, may I be excused for taking this opportunity?

I am, Sir, etc.,

J. A. H.

RHYME AND METRE OR VERS LIBRE

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—May I—very humbly, as conscious of the deference due to a gentleman who used to play under the drawing-room sofa of the Rossetti family—add two points to those ably presented by your reviewer?

(1) The poetic portions of the Old Testament, which so appeal to Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, are metrical in the original, and even in the translation.

(2) The piece of vers libre beginning "That was my eldest son," which Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer gives us, depends for its success, which "may not be" that of poetry, mainly on the assonances, especially on the concluding assonance of the word "more," which binds the piece into a unity in the manner of rhyme.

To any impartial onlooker, the attitude of Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer towards formal verse compares very unfavourably with that of your reviewer towards vers libre. I still have a languid recollection of a languid lecture by Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer, in the course of which he discovered that the defence of vers libre involved a silly deriding of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant."

One does not see why poetry, if it can be written in ordinary prose, cannot also be written in vers libre, which is a link between prose and verse. But why attempt the impossible task of condemning the form evolved by the great English poets merely because one recognizes that vers libre, when it succeeds, is also a form, a very strict form, in which to write poetry?

Yours sincerely,

R. L. MEGROZ.

440, Camden Road, N.7,
July 16, 1920.

Foreign Literature
DUPELIX

DUPELIX ET L'INDE FRANÇAISE. Par Alfred Martineau. (Paris, Champion. 30fr.)

THE biographies of rulers of India run to length, and M. Martineau's study of Duplex conforms to custom. This formidable tome of 500 pages is the first of three that the late Governor of the French Establishments in India proposes to devote to Clive's great rival. The danger is that the reputation of the hero will be buried under the vastness of the monument. But M. Martineau writes with such fullness of authority, his survey of a fine though imperfect character is so judicious, that he will, it is to be hoped, find many readers to assimilate his disquisitions on currency, cargoes and the other concerns of the French factories in the East. When he comes to make his points, he makes them well.

Gibbon reckoned Pompey and Belisarius among those who have exquisitely tasted the extremes of glory and disgrace. The name of Duplex may not unfairly be added to the list. With inadequate resources he made an audacious throw for power; for a time he succeeded and governed Southern India from the river Kristna to Cape Comorin; Clive repulsed his levies at Arcot, and razed his City of Victory to the ground; he returned home after futile struggles, to die in neglect and poverty. Such was the fate of the man who, as Macaulay well remarks, was the first to perceive the possibility of founding a European empire on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy. M. Martineau will tell us, no doubt, all about that momentous clash of wills in his subsequent volumes. The present one, embracing Duplex' beginnings and his governorship of Chandernagore, is occupied with the period of preparation. Curiosity naturally invites a scrutiny of his dispatches, to discover, if possible, the moment when his ambitions germinated in his brain. The search is as futile as a similar investigation of the writings of the inscrutable Cavour would be. Duplex is concerned with the administrative squabbles of the moment, and with the momentary difficulties created by the Nawab. If he ever alludes to French prestige, it is as a polemic against his superiors, Lenoir and Dumas, rather than a principle. We shall not be far wrong if we conclude that his policy did not take definite shape until he was promoted to Pondicherry as Governor.

Invoices and bills of lading, as Macaulay puts it, are, however, no bad training for plans of conquest. Duplex was evidently alive to the romance of commerce, and during his ten years' residence at Chandernagore he strengthened considerably the position of the French in Bengal. Shaken by the invasion of Nadir Shah, and paralysed by the risings of the Mahrattas, the authority of the Mogul counted for little on the Hoogly. But the Nawab, with his propensity to play off the Dutch and British against the French, to levy every kind of exaction and bribe, and even to clap officials into gaol, had very much to be reckoned with. Duplex displayed extraordinary patience in dealing with a potentate well calculated to wear that virtue out. His complacency under native durance brought down upon him, indeed, the rebukes of the French East India Company. He was, too, at this period of his life a "good European," in so far as circumstances permitted; his relations with Stackhouse at Calcutta were cordial, and the Dutchman was his friend. Under his politic direction, decadent factories revived, and he pushed French commerce afar, to Bassorah, to Assam; he even entertained the idea of a voyage to Australia. Permitted, as the custom was, to trade on his own account, he grew rich, but, as M. Martineau contends, not inordinately so. When he went to Pondicherry he was

worth 120,000 rupees, and had served the Company well.

This interesting man seems, in fact, to have been an admirable administrator, but a most difficult subordinate. He reminds us not a little of Lord Durham in his inability to accept directions either from Paris or from the Superior Council at Pondicherry. He was in hot water from the moment of his arrival in India, as the result of quarrels with a close-fisted old father, and one time was actually dismissed. Lenoir, his first chief, appears to have been nearly as peppery as himself, but Dumas, the next Governor, though of conciliatory temper, frequently had to complain of Dupleix' language. His unofficial communications are as indiscreet as Palmerston's, and freedom of diction can no further go. Even in his official documents, he exhibits an unwise partiality for the word *coquin*, and the East India Company complained generally of his *turlipinades*. In his various controversies with the Pondicherry Council he was usually in the right, and it is significant that most of his proceedings, however arbitrary, were ultimately confirmed by the Company. But he overplayed the part of the "man on the spot." During a mighty dispute, which it would be tedious to particularize, known as the affair of the rupees, he angrily inquired of Dumas and his colleagues: "Croyez-vous que nous sommes à votre service ou vos domestiques? D'où tirez-vous, s'il vous plait, cette autorité?" The climax came when Dupleix was passed over for the cross of the order of Saint-Lazaire, whereas both Dumas and the famous La Bourdonnais, his future competitor, received distinctions. Then he boiled over, extolling his services and developing his grievances in a letter calculated to make the directors of the Company rock in their chairs. It was fortunate for him that he had a powerful friend at court in his brother, a farmer-general, his agent for the distribution of presents including bottles of wine and birds of paradise. The Company deserves credit for recognizing his abilities beneath his extravagance, but it cannot have advanced him to Pondicherry without qualms—qualms which the sequel justified.

M. Martineau enables us to get a fairly clear idea of Dupleix the man. Like many who are riotous with their pens, he seems to have been disposed to taciturnity and self-communing. He affected magnificence, but it must be remembered that the jewels and curios he assiduously collected were a recognized form of wealth in the East. Though blunt, and *bourgeois* in manner, he was not without the graces. In his bachelor days he gave musical entertainments, and there was a club or coterie at Chandarnagore at which he figured in the happier hour of social pleasure. Nor was Dupleix destitute of affection, since he never forgot Mme. de Roujoux, who had been kind to him in a lonely childhood, and he came liberally to her assistance when he was rich and she was in distress. His marriage, too, at forty-four, with the widow of his friend Vincens, the mother of eleven children, of whom five were alive, is a proof of constancy in one of varied fortunes.

LL. S.

GUS BOFA

ROLLMOPS. Par Gus Bofa. (Paris, Belles Editions, 3fr.)

IT was somewhere about 1913 that we first became aware of the presence, on the French horizon, of an unknown comic talent. Gus Bofa—that was the charmingly non-committal name of the new star. At the time of our first delighted discovery of him M. Gus Bofa was a regular contributor to the *Sourire*. In those days, by the way, the *Sourire* was a paper which it was still possible to read and look at with pleasure. It had at its

service a dozen good draughtsmen, its comic feuilletons were sometimes superb, and you could buy it for twenty-five centimes—a great deal of pleasure for a little money. Now, the *Sourire* costs a franc and is hardly distinguishable from the *Vie Parisienne*.

Plus ne suis ce que j'ai esté
Et ne le sçaurais jamais estre :
Mon beau printemps et mon esté
Ont fait le sault par la fenestre.

Newspapers and men, we all of us tell the same tale. But to return to M. Bofa.

In those palmy days, then, we knew him as the theatrical caricaturist of the *Sourire*, an accomplished draughtsman, admirably ironic and possessing a comic manner that trembled deliciously on the verge of vulgarity, but, like all good farce, never stepped over the edge. Then came the war; the *Sourire*, with its little crew of Gothamites, plunged over the lip of the cataract and was lost in the spray and thunder. But M. Bofa emerged from the whirlpool, higher in spirits, and drier in humour than ever. In conjunction with M. Pierre MacOrlan, the fantaisiste, Gus Bofa has made, in the course of the last three years or so, a number of characteristic appearances. To-day he makes his bow unsupported by literary alliances. "Rollmops" is entirely his own, text, illustrations and all.

The opening sentences set the note of the book :

Si Désiré Rollmops fut dieu, ce fut bien vraiment pour ses seules qualités personnelles, car il n'y avait encore jamais eu de dieux dans sa famille. Son père, qui était rentier, mourait quelques années avant sa naissance. Sa mère vécut trop pour éviter le petit scandale de cette conception tardive et juste assez pour le mettre au monde.

And contrapuntal to this theme we find on the next page two superb illustrations: "Le Père de Rollmops, d'après le tableau de Philippe de Champaigne," and, full of significant form, a "Mère de Rollmops, d'après la statuette de Monsieur Matisse." The spirit that inspires the book is a joyful *je m'en fiche*. The author, one feels, *se fiche* of everything without exception. To-day that spirit plays harmlessly about the restricted theme of an imbecile boy who believes himself to be God, "un monsieur d'origine mystérieuse, obligé d'entendre des propos à lui destinés, et à quoi il ne comprend rien—enfin myope." But it would not surprise us if one of these days M. Bofa should put forth all his energies and *se fiche* himself on a grandiose scale of humanity at large and the whole cosmos. At any rate, nothing would give us greater pleasure than to see him making the attempt.

THE WOMEN OF THE HAREM

LE HAREM ENTR'OUVERT. Par A.-R. de Lens. (Paris, Calmann-Lévy. 4fr. 90.)

WE tend to think of the world depicted in the Arabian Nights as something unreal and fantastic, but every now and again we are reminded that it persists in the very midst of modern civilization. Mme. de Lens has had exceptional opportunities of studying the life of Mahometan women of the upper classes in Tunis and Morocco. She has been admitted to the friendship of great but unlettered ladies sequestered in harems; she has handled their jewels and turbans, and learned the secrets of their conjugal existence. In return she has delighted them with stereoscopic views and out-of-date catalogues from the Galeries Lafayette. Her book purports to be an *étude de mœurs*, but it is entirely concerned with one aspect of the subject, and does not, therefore, convey the same impression of realism as Adès and Jospovici's "Goha le Simple," which, though nominally a novel, presents a complete society and a coherent *Weltanschauung*. Parts of "Le Harem entr'ouvert" come perilously near pornography. Is it possible that Mme. de Lens, in spite of her Western education and journalistic enterprise, is mentally not so very unlike the ladies of the harem?

W.

LETTERS FROM PARIS

IV.—ON THE SYMBOLIST MOVEMENT IN FRENCH POETRY.*

THE readers of THE ATHENÆUM have certainly not forgotten two Letters by M. Paul Valéry on the Spiritual Crisis and on the Intellectual Crisis which were published in the numbers for April 11 and May 2, 1919. Handling a subject which originated, or rather crystallized, with the war, but which the war speedily turned into a questionable weapon in the hands of national or international propagandism, these Letters had the signal merit of lifting the whole matter into the purified air of the laboratory or of the operating-room. Indeed, whenever M. Paul Valéry takes up a problem for consideration, he reminds us of nothing more than of the gloved surgeon, neat, almost dainty in his skill, careful before all things that none of the elements with which he has to deal should incur the slightest risk of contamination. He has recently accomplished a feat of this kind of which his former readers may perhaps be glad to hear some account.

The occasion was an Avant-Propos which he wrote for a volume of poems by M. Lucien Fabre, "Connaissance de la Déesse" (†). Nobody would be more willing than M. Fabre himself to acknowledge the amount of his debt to M. Valéry: this first book is on the very face of it the book of a disciple. But whereas, for many beginners, the choice of a master is determined exclusively by considerations of medium and technique, in hope thereby to shorten the period of literary apprenticeship—so that they run the risk of never reaching beyond the shell of the works themselves, and may get stranded in mere mannerism—the case of M. Fabre is different: a community of tastes, and in provinces that lie outside the usual pale of poetry, certainly played its part in the powerful attraction which drew M. Fabre to M. Valéry's work. An engineer by profession, M. Fabre combines with a serious scientific culture, especially on the mathematical side—he has at the printer's a volume on the recent theories of Einstein—an active interest, and of old standing, in the higher disciplines of abstract thought as manifested in philosophy or even in theology, and he cannot but have been struck by the way in which similar leanings and acquirements stood in good stead to the author of the "Introduction à la Méthode de Léonard de Vinci" on the day he elected to return to poetry. Such an example must have acted on M. Fabre as an almost intoxicating stimulant, but though his book shows him busily engaged in the study of all the formal elements of M. Valéry's art, at least it is not without a full knowledge of the fine and intricate mental hammering that went to the producing of each of them, and of the strict schooling, the sacrifices, any effort of appropriation correspondingly entails. In "Connaissance de la Déesse" the author has proposed to himself, to use M. Valéry's words, "de faire ce qu'il y a de plus difficile et de plus enviable dans notre art—je veux dire un système de poèmes formant drame spirituel, et drame achevé qui se joue entre les puissances mêmes de notre être." Of such a task the difficulties are tremendous, and could not without injustice be ignored—it was not to be expected that at a first venture the indispensable transmutation should everywhere take place: it is enough if, as is here the case, the carbon not infrequently sparkles into a diamond. It is therefore much to be hoped that M. Lucien Fabre will persevere; in our literature I do not recall any perfectly successful "système de poèmes formant drame spirituel," and it would be a goal worthy of M. Fabre's ambition to try to give us in due time—when, matured and strengthened, his poetical faculty emerges from the period of assimilation—some poem that might approach such masterpieces as Rossetti's "House of Life" or Stefan Georg's "Der Teppich des Lebens."

The great interest of M. Valéry's Avant-Propos centres in the light which it throws upon two much-debated and vexed questions—questions on which for depth of knowledge, prolonged reflection and successful practice nobody in France is better qualified than he to speak: the true nature of "la

poésie pure," and the inner significance of the symbolist movement as it appeared in French literature at the end of the nineteenth century. The two questions are intimately connected, and not to miss the trend of M. Valéry's argument, it is necessary to follow it step by step. M. Valéry begins by observing that the specific object of poetry, and the proper means for attaining it, never having been elucidated with precision, the production of poems on almost any subject has proceeded until our time; and he grants at the start that the most important poems in existence, the most admirable perhaps, partake of the didactic or the historic order, and borrow part of their substance and interest from notions with which the most pedestrian prose would have been able to cope. "On peut les traduire," says he, "sans les rendre tout insignifiants." But differentiation was bound to come:

On voit enfin, vers le milieu du XIX^e siècle, se prononcer dans notre littérature une volonté remarquable d'isoler définitivement la Poésie de tout autre essence qu'elle-même. Une telle préparation de la poésie à l'état pur avait été prédite et recommandée avec la plus grande précision par Edgar Poë. Il n'est donc pas étonnant de voir commencer dans Baudelaire cet essai d'une perfection qui ne se préoccupe plus que d'elle-même. . . . Au même Baudelaire appartient une autre initiative. Le premier parmi nos poètes, il subit, il invoque, il interroge la Musique.

And in a finely orchestrated page which—without the mention of a single name or any allusion whatsoever—seems to transport us, on a Sunday afternoon of the early nineties, to the *promenoir* of Lamoureux, near the great, yet familiar figure of Mallarmé, M. Valéry evokes the almost religious ecstasies which the poets of his generation underwent during these dominical vespers:

Ils sortaient accablés de concerts. Accablés—éblouis; comme si, dans le septième ciel transportés par une cruelle faveur, on ne les eût ravis jusqu'à cette altitude que pour qu'ils connussent une lumineuse contemplation de possibilités interdites et de merveilles inimitables.

He then proceeds to draw his conclusions:

Ce qui fut baptisé le Symbolisme se résume très simplement dans l'intention commune à plusieurs familles de poètes (d'ailleurs ennemies entre elles), de "reprendre à la Musique leur bien." Le secret de ce mouvement n'est pas autre. L'obscurité, les étrangetés qui lui furent tant reprochées; l'apparence de relations trop intimes avec les littératures anglaise, slave ou germanique; les désordres syntaxiques, les rythmes irréguliers, les curiosités du vocabulaire, les figures continues . . . tout se déduit facilement sitôt que le principe est reconnu. C'est en vain que les observateurs de ces expériences, et que ceux mêmes qui les pratiquaient, s'en prenaient à ce pauvre mot de *symbole*. Il ne contient que ce que l'on veut; si quelqu'un lui attribue sa propre espérance, il l'y retrouve! Mais nous étions nourris de musique, et nos têtes littéraires ne rêvaient que de tirer du langage presque les mêmes effets que les causes purement sonores produisaient sur nos êtres nerveux. Les uns, Wagner; les autres chérissaient Schumann.

Such an endeavour on the part of the poets "de reprendre à la Musique leur bien" (‡) involved an unprecedented intellectual effort—a summoning from the most distant points of the mental horizon of all the resources of the mind—but, as M. Valéry is careful to note, the thought was transferred from the poem itself to its "phase de préparation":

La philosophie, et même la morale tendirent à fuir les œuvres pour se placer dans les réflexions qui les précèdent. . . . Parler aujourd'hui de poésie philosophique (fût-ce en invoquant Alfred de Vigny, Leconte de Lisle, et quelques autres), c'est naïvement confondre des conditions et des applications de l'esprit incompatibles entre elles. N'est-ce pas oublier que le but de celui qui spéculé est de fixer ou de créer une notion—c'est-à-dire un *pouvoir* et un *instrument de pouvoir*, cependant que le poète moderne essaie de produire en nous un *état* et de porter cet état exceptionnel au point d'une jouissance parfaite. . . .

And in this definition—so accurate, yet so limpid—the yearnings of a whole generation of sincere, but half-articulate seekers speak out at last, with the voice of the one survivor who, having kept unalloyed the arduous faith of his youth, gathers to-day "the full-ripened grain."

But M. Valéry looks around him: not only have nearly all his comrades fallen off, but those that come after gaze elsewhere; separated from the heroic period of symbolism by "un abîme d'événements," he may have felt at times

* Letter I. appeared in THE ATHENÆUM for April 9, Letter II. on May 7, and Letter III. on June 18.

† Société Littéraire de France, 10, Rue de l'Odéon, Paris.

‡ The quotation is from Mallarmé's "Divagation Première relativement au vers." I give the full text later on.

a certain flatness dull the concentrated purpose of earlier days. If it were only a mistake, after all! Scrupulously M. Valéry puts himself the question: with a dispassionate, almost impersonal disinterestedness—very characteristic of the whole tenor of his being—he is ready to make light of the results if only he can secure the authenticity, shield and safeguard the purity of the aim:

Pareilles tentatives ne vont pas sans audaces, sans risques, sans cruautés exagérées, sans enfantillages. . . . La tradition, l'intelligibilité, l'équilibre psychique, qui sont les victimes ordinaires des mouvements de l'esprit vers son objet, ont quelquefois souffert de notre dévotion à la plus pure beauté. Nous fûmes ténébreux quelquefois: et quelquefois puérils. Notre langage ne fut pas toujours aussi digne de louanges et de durée que notre ambition le souhaitait; et nos innombrables thèses peuplent mélancoliquement les doux enfers de notre souvenir. . . . Passe encore pour les œuvres, passe pour les opinions et les préférences techniques. Mais notre idée elle-même, notre souverain bien, ne sont-ils plus maintenant que de pâles éléments de l'oubli? Faut-il périr à ce point? Comment périr, ô camarades?—Qu'est-ce donc qui a secrètement altéré nos certitudes, atténué notre vérité, dispersé nos courages? A-t-on fait cette découverte que la lumière puisse vieillir? . . . Il nous apparaissait si clairement qu'il n'y avait pas de défaut dans notre idéal.

M. Valéry's mind is far too alert ever to rest until it has found a satisfactory explanation, and divining at last that he had indeed been right all through, but that precisely, given the conditions of life, there is something ruinous that almost amounts to being wrong in being right to that degree, he drives his shaft deep into the very centre of the target:

Il faut supposer, au contraire, que notre voie était bien l'unique; que nous touchions par notre désir à l'essence même de notre art, et que nous avions véritablement déchiffré la signification d'ensemble des labeurs de nos ancêtres, relevé ce qui paraît dans leurs œuvres de plus délicieux, composé notre chemin de ces vestiges, suivi à l'infini cette piste précieuse, favorisée de palmes et de puits d'eau douce; à l'horizon, toujours, la poésie pure . . . Là le péril; là précisément notre perte; et là même, le but. Car c'est une limite du monde qu'une vérité de cette espèce; il n'est pas permis de s'y établir. Rien de si pur ne peut coexister avec les conditions de la vie. Nous traversons seulement l'idée de la perfection, comme la main impunément tranche la flamme; mais la flamme est inhabitable, et les demeures de la plus haute sérénité sont nécessairement déserts. Je veux dire que notre tendance vers l'extrême rigueur de l'art—vers une conclusion des prémisses que nous proposaient les réussites antérieures—vers une beauté toujours plus consciente de sa genèse, toujours plus indépendante de tous sujets, et des attraites sentimentaux vulgaires comme de grossiers effets de l'éloquence—tout ce zèle trop éclairé, peut-être conduisait-il à quelque état presque inhumain. C'est là un fait général: la métaphysique, la morale et même les sciences l'ont éprouvé. La poésie absolue ne peut procéder que par merveilles exceptionnelles. Les œuvres qu'elle compose entièrement constituent dans les trésors impondérables d'une littérature ce qui s'y remarque de plus rare et de plus improbable. Mais comme le vide parfait, et de même que le plus bas degré de la température, qui ne peuvent pas être atteints, ne se laissent même approcher qu'au prix d'une progression épuisante d'efforts, ainsi la pureté dernière de notre art demande à ceux qui le conçoivent de si longues et de si rudes contraintes qu'elles absorbent toute la joie naturelle d'être poète, pour ne laisser enfin que l'orgueil de n'être jamais satisfait. Cette sévérité est insupportable à la plupart des jeunes hommes doués de l'instinct poétique. Nos successeurs n'ont pas envié notre tourment; ils n'ont pas adopté nos délicatesses; ils ont pris quelquefois pour des libertés ce que nous avions essayé comme difficultés nouvelles; et parfois ils ont déchiré ce que nous n'entendions que disséquer. Ils ont ouvert aussi sur les accidents de l'être les yeux que nous avions fermés pour nous faire plus semblables à sa substance. . . . Tout ceci était à prévoir. Mais la suite, non plus, n'était pas impossible à conjecturer. Ne devait-on pas essayer quelque jour de lier notre passé antérieur et ce passé qui vint après lui, en empruntant de l'un et de l'autre ceux de leurs enseignements qui sont compatibles? Je vois ça et là ce travail naturel se faire dans quelques esprits. La vie ne procède pas autrement; et ce même procès qui s'observe dans la suite des êtres, et dans lequel la continuité et l'atavisme se combinent, la vie littéraire le reproduit dans ses enchaînements.

CHARLES DU BOS.

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND's reputation is suffering from an excess of publicity. The collection of essays during war-time now translated under the title "The Forerunners" (Allen & Unwin, 8s. 6d. net), though inspired by the noblest sentiments, is a chaotic and unsatisfactory book. There is a rhetoric of pacifism as well as of militarism.

The Week's Books

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